LIFE AND WORKS OF FATHER VAUGHAN

FRANCISCAN

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Yours Truly
J. J. Vaughan

LIFE AND WORKS

OF

FATHER VAUGHAN

Part One

EMBRACING

SERMONS, LECTURES, POEMS AND DISSERTATIONS

Written by this Truly Great Man to Uplift the Moral Tone of A

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Part Two

EMBRACING

"A WOMAN OF THE WEST"

And Other Subject Matter

With Characteristic Illustrations

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A WOMAN OF THE WEST

ILLUSTRATED

INTRODUCTION

IT was but natural that a man of the peculiar mental, moral and intellectual caliber of Father Vaughan should write a play. His life's high ideals impelled him in this direction —his trend and training, his wondrous gifts of magnetic oratory and brilliant eloquence, his keen appreciation, gleaned from special experience and observation of the great influence of the stage as an educator.

The great American theater had been prostituted to probably its lowest and most degraded condition; it lay like a slimy hulk on a foul, muddy beach, emanating vilest odors. A fetid wave of filthy problem plays, mostly imported, products of the diseased and putrid minds of morbid and sordid cynics, was sweeping over the country. Literary brutes and monsters were regarded as high and mighty philosophers. Their infamous sophistries, that laughed at the sanctity of marriage and sneered at the purity of woman, were received with piqued and gaping interest by silly and shameless people who aped to be in the fashion—the fashion as prescribed by unscrupulous press-agents and provided by pandering managers—until theaters became schools of gilded vice, poisoning the minds and affecting the morals of the nation. Never before, so far as the social evil decried by Pope was concerned, was there such elaborate, artistic, baleful inducement "to first endure, then pity, then embrace."

The billboards were polluted with the portraits of actresses whose great histrionic ambition was to represent fallen women. Playhouses were sinks of vicious and iniquitous suggestion whose stench would not have been tolerated in London even under the rude censorship of Shakespearean days, that closed licentious theaters, sent playwrights to the pillory and actors to the whipping post.

In the midst of this polluting hot air from Inferno, that pervaded not only playhouses but fashionable women's clubs and *recherche* pink teas where piquant analysis of incompatibility, affinity, immorality and conjugal infidelity became the fad, came like a welcome, refreshing breeze the drama of Father Vaughan.

The priest-dramatist did not cater unsavory social problems for prurient audiences. He constructed, with his personal knowledge of stagecraft, a plain, cleanly, wholesome play for plain, cleanly, wholesome people. He did not deal in confusion or asphyxiation of morals. His heroes and heroines were sure-enough ones of their kind, and his villains needed no label. His melodrama, in parts sensational enough to appease the most earnest connoisseur of thrills, was of the reliable, old-fashioned but acceptable kind that shows the edifying and salutary moral of infamy defeated and virtue triumphant. He sent his audience home satisfied with the success of his breezy and spirited heroine and retaining pleasant memories of the mining camp in the Thunder mountains.

It is said that Father Vaughan intended originally to place the scene of his drama in Ireland. A gold mine in the emerald isle! To many the idea will seem strange,

even grotesque. Yet it is quite within the bounds of possibility. There have been gold mines in Ireland; probably there are some there today, awaiting discovery. History tells that over four thousand years ago the Milesian Judachan worked gold mines in what is now the county of Wicklow. In modern times—in 1796—a mine of the auriferous was discovered there, to an accompaniment of pathos and tragedy, as if the ancient Milesian miner vented his wrath on the discoverer. The latter, a poor schoolmaster who taught his pupils under a hedge in days when Catholic teachers were banned and chased under the penal laws in Ireland, found deposits of gold in the streams flowing from the mountain of Croghan Kinshela. He disappeared from the place, to return after a time clad in rich attire and with every appearance of wealth. Being deeply enamoured of a beautiful girl of the village he sought her hand in marriage, and she consented to accept him on condition that he would first reveal to her the secret of his riches. The perfidious maiden broke her promise and betrayed his secret to a favored swain, who promptly proceeded to profit by it, and the despairing master drowned himself in the stream where he had found his fatal treasure—this with a disappointing lack of what is termed poetic vengeance.

"There stands a mansion, girt with trees,
Within a pleasaunce rich with splendor,
Where faints the odor-laden breeze
When summer winds sigh 'round it tender.

'Twas built from out her shining hoard
By fair and treacherous Maureen Halley,
Her lover husband reigned its lord;
The master's grave's in Ballinvally."

Somehow the secret of the Croghan Kinshela gold got abroad; peasant and other prospectors thronged eagerly to the locality, and in less than six weeks not less than 2,666 ounces of pure gold, which brought $50,000, were found in the mountain streams, some of the nuggets weighing as much as twenty-two ounces. In a few years, however, the supply was exhausted, and though explorers cut to the stony heart of the mountain not another grain of gold was discovered. The vein or deposit dropped out of sight as suddenly and mysteriously as that of Old Thunder, in "A Woman of the West." Perhaps, like that of Old Thunder, the vein is there amid the rocks, awaiting the arrival of some fortunate mining expert.

Although Father Vaughan did not place his mining camp in Ireland, he took his heroine from the chief Irish gold country, bringing her from the famous beautiful vale of Avoca, at the celebrated meeting of the waters. He made her a vigorous and spirited woman, full of animal strength and animal courage, of tact, sense and shrewdness, withal of high moral ideals. And he placed her to fight the battle of life among rough miners in a mountain camp in Idaho.

It was on the night of May 6, 1908, that the presentation of "A Woman of the West" commenced in the Bush Temple theater, Chicago. The leading role was entrusted to Mrs. Annie Mack Berlein, whose initial histrionic triumphs were won in the days of Harrigan & Hart, and who has been described by a standard critic as "always a bonny, wholesome, energetic and temperamental actress of authority." Supporting her were stock members of the Players' company, the entire cast being as follows:

Langford, overseer of the Cookoo mine....Frank H. LaRue
Tom Naughton, owner of the Old Thunder mine...
..... Robert Lowe
Levy, Naughton's partner.....William Devere
Mr. Bronson, English mining expert.....W. E. La Rose
Francis .....Will D. Corbett
Ching, a Chinaman.....Mr. Toole
Bill .....Edward J. Mack
Jack .....Allan Dinehart
Joe, negro servant.....William Evarts
Jim..... Michael Sullivan
Buck.....Sheridan Davidson
Pete..... Mr. Updyke
Father Malone.....George Roberts
Mr. DeCamp.....Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Newberry.....Gaylord Hurlock
Tim Naughton.....Maude Potter
Nell Naughton.....Miss Kennedy
Miss Bronson.....Anne Jameson
Sarah.....Florine Arnold
Jennette..... Catherine Brownlee
Mrs. Harrington.....Miss Arnold
Miss Wilson.....Miss Bingham
Nance.....Annie Mack Berlein

Many priests and nuns were in the first night audience, which was large and enthusiastic, generously punctuating with applause and laughter the hits and situations of the comedy-drama. Amy Leslie, the well-known dramatic critic of the Chicago Daily News, and past-grand commander of the language of stage technique, at whose verbal exploits it is said that the dictionary lies over on its back and kicks, gave the play kindly and characteristic commendation. She said, variously, in her critique: "The little play is sincerely and pleasantly written and has good, fair lines and several studies of merit in character color. Its reason for creating a 'whisper' league would scarcely be apparent except to a carefully compressed religious view. There

are prayers naively mixed up in scenes with plenty of rakish cuss words and slang. . . . The work of the dramatist is obvious and intelligent and if the scenes leading to an event pucker with suggestions of tricks to be played, it is because unripe production renders the mechanism of the play too apparent."

And of Mrs. Berlein, the star of the piece, the creator of the character, she said: "Her Irish woman in Father Vaughan's play is a richly elegant genre picture. She rides in driving a stage-coach, and her brogue, her handling of the humor, cleanly wit and emotional moments in the play, are most inspiring. It is a pleasure to watch the actress of velvety methods build a part out of choice fragments until it stands revealed a capital work of comedy."

What attracted particular and rather uneasy attention to "A Woman of the West" was what was by many regarded as a daring experiment and startling innovation in matters theatrical, namely: the presentation of the interior of a Catholic chapel on the stage, with an altar, and a vestmented priest represented in the act of saying Mass. This feature occasioned a general buzz and profound sensation in Catholic circles, especially in the cathedral parish, whence the Bush Temple theater largely draws its audiences. Some protested that this theatric device approached profanation and sacrilege, and these were promptly and positively opposed by others who argued that the staged representation of the midnight Mass suggested and inculcated high sentiment and helped to convey to even those outside the church the sublime and dignified character and mystery of the ceremony. The views of the latter received a sort of canonical sup-

port from those who pointed out that the part of the celebration represented was prior to the consecration and that therefore there was no desecration of the sacrifice or wounding of tender religious feelings.

The strenuous controversy that arose from this vexed question concerns us not; here we present not the play, but the novelization of it, in a way calculated not to ruffle the feelings of the most sensitive. An acted play is one thing and a printed story is another, and great is the difference between them.

In casting about for one to do "A Woman of the West" into narrative form, the literary executors of Father Vaughan hit upon Mr. P. G. Smyth, well-known as a newspaper writer in Chicago and as a frequent contributor to magazines, religious and secular. Mr. Smyth is author of many novels, including "The Wild Rose of Lough Gill," which has run through numerous editions in Ireland, been profitably pirated in America, and run as a serial in many publications from Dublin to San Francisco, from Canada to Buenos Ayres. He has also written "King and Viking," "Under the White Cockade," "The Green and the Tricolor" and other historical novels, and a drama which has been repeatedly successfully produced in Ireland, namely: "A Price on His Head," dealing with events of 1798, the memorable Irish year of insurrection.

Of him, Mr. Charles J. O'Malley, editor of the New World, of Chicago, says incidentally, in sketches of local Catholic writers published in the Rosary magazine: "P. G. Smyth—probably every Catholic in Chicago has seen this name some time or other, and millions of non-Catholics have seen it besides. It is not too much to say

that Mr. Smyth has contributed at some period to nearly every one of the leading periodicals of the country, Catholic and secular. His work may be found in everything—from The American Catholic Quarterly to Munsey's and The Argosy. He is a journalist doing special work for the great Chicago dailies, but he is much more than this. First and last, he has written nearly a dozen novels which have been published serially in as many journals. Last summer the Southern Cross, of Buenos Ayres, Argentina, republished a story of his written twenty years ago for a Dublin newspaper. The Irish Catholic, of Dublin, is now republishing another of his serials, written long ago. He was a distinguished writer in Ireland, and, later, a well-known journalist in London. Here, in Chicago, it is generally admitted by all who know him that he is a man of genius. His humor is so exquisite that often the little skits of verse contributed by him to the Daily News set the entire city laughing. And he is a man of splendid scholarship, a genuine student, an indefatigable toiler. He is one of those rare men who can write on any subject and write well. Aside from his work as a journalist, he is a delver into old books that exist in the several great libraries — a seeker after long-forgotten facts—an omniverous reader, an unwearied writer.

"Personally, P. G. Smyth is excessively modest and unassuming. In reality he belongs to the school of Lever, Kickham and Lover—genial, witty, unpretentious, and apparently careless of fame."

With this account of her introduction to the theatrical world and her further debut into the realm of literature we gently lift the robust form of this Woman of the West from behind the footlights—albeit Mrs. Annie Mack

Berlien still continues to familiarize playgoers with the fine character of Nance Naughton—and place her comfortably between the pages of the present book, enshrining her in a monument to the memory of him who imagined and designed her.

ANNIE MACK BERLEIN.

A WOMAN OF THE WEST

CHAPTER I.

AT THE MINING CAMP.

BACK of the cabins and shacks that housed Tom Naughton and his wife and family, and his diggers and blasters, the mountains, rough with precipices, spotted with shaggy woods, with here and there a miner's dwelling about as rude as the abode of primitive man, sloped to the eternal snows. Through the wilderness of rocks and scrags the rugged stage road, skimming the brink of gullies, climbed away into the dim distance in the direction of what is called civilization.

From the foot of a great gray bowlder near the home of the mine boss gushed a crystal spring, which fell tinkling into a rock basin. The music of the falling water blended with the silvery voice of pretty and piquant Nell Naughton, symmetrical and vigorous of arm, as she rubbed and wrung the Naughton family linen with all the graceful vim of a blanchisseuse on the banks of the Seine. And the song that rippled from her ripe red lips sounded sweet as the carols of the thrushes in the vale of Avoca, whence had come her Celtic mother:

"Far o'er the sea there's a dear little island,
Ireland they call it, a dear name to me,
And while I live it will always be my land—
Ireland, I love you, acushla machree."

A pretty song, though occasionally it found an erratic accompaniment in the clattering of pots and pans, the jingling of cutlery and crockery that floated, together with a strong aroma of cooking, from the adjacent log shanties, where a meet repast for stalwart and hungry men was being prepared by three varied and widespread nationalities, white, yellow and black, respectively represented by suave and volatile Francis, of France, alert and willing Ching, of China, and amiable and conciliatory Joe, whose forbears hailed originally from the Dark Continent. They were an industrious trio, as they had need to be, considering the coming voracious company. Francis, accomplished chef, a handsome brunette Gaul to the manner born, presently came forth wiping his hands in his apron. For a while he feasted his eyes and ears on the movements and music of the fair laundress—a proceeding which was to him a frequent and favorite one. His dark eyes glistened; he stepped impulsively towards her.

"Well, that job is done," exclaimed Nell, with a sigh of relief. Casting the final garment aside, she arose and stretched her lissome figure.

Immediately Francis, the volatile, had her hands clasped in his.

"Ah, mademoiselle," he exclaimed with ardent devotion, "zees beautiful white hands were nevair intended for such work, such coarse and common work—nevair! Now, if you would only permittez moi—if I could but help you—"

Seemingly used to the cavalier advances of the Frenchman, she laughed as she whirled his hands aside. "There, there—don't start sentimental nonsense when

"WELL, THAT JOB IS DONE," EXCLAIMED NELL, WITH A SIGH OF RELIEF.

there's so much work to be done. The beautiful white hands will be all the whiter for a little washing."

"Ah, but, mademoiselle," he protested, "it is not proper—God and nature have surely made you for better things. Ah, if I could only speak! You think I am only ze cook! Let me tell you I am ze gentleman—a count—oui, par Dieu, a man of title in my native land."

She flashed on him a look of mingled interest and amusement. Being unsophisticated in the ways and ambitions of "society," foreign titles were to her matters of supreme indifference. Counts, real or bogus, counted but little with this daughter of the west. Yet in the vivacious Francis, so strangely thrown among them—left penniless in the mining region through the failure of an opera company, projected from the stage to the kitchen—she had conceived a lively and kindly curiosity. Therefore of the gently coquettish were her protests against his continuous advances.

"Don't, Francis, don't; be a good boy! Take a better time to tell me about your title and your fine castles in France. But just now we have need to be tending to our work and getting things in order by the time mother gets back."

The young Frenchman made a gesture of impatience. His voice assumed a ring of exultation.

"Bah with ze work! I work no more, mademoiselle—not this kind of work. Sacre! I come out west wis ze opera company; ze prima donna falls sick, ze company disbands, and I am left no friends, no money. Nothing left for me but ze kitchen, ze pots and pans. And now I am free, and now—"

A tone of regret crept into his voice, a look of yearning into his eyes.

"And now, Francis?"

"And now, mademoiselle, I go away. I have earned ze money to take me. I go to San Francisco—back to the world, back to ze grand opera."

She looked at him in sudden dismay. For months he had been to them all a cheerful and entertaining companion, and to herself a most devoted cavalier, this impulsive count of the cuisine. A sense of loneliness smote her.

"What!" she exclaimed. "Will you leave us now, when everything seems to be going against us?"

He glanced towards the mighty mountains, beyond which beckoned ambition and opportunity, then looked raptly on the girl before him, who was viewing him with eyes in which lay something more than anxiety.

"Leave?" he repeated. "Nevair, nevair—if you say stay!"

A glow burned on her cheeks. "The boys are coming back from their hunt," she remarked, abruptly changing the subject.

From around an angle of the mountain floated the sound of singing, and tramping down the trail came a merry band of rugged manhood, well laden with spoils of their raid.

"Good, good—great hunters, all of you!" cried Nell, clapping her hands at sight of the trophies.

"Reckon they done skinned the country," remarked Joe, the colored kitchener, as he staggered into the cooking shanty beneath a load of mountain meat.

"Well, the old man sent us after a change of diet, and I guess we got it," complacently said a stalwart

hunter-miner, as he proceeded to refresh himself at the spring; "after so much salt pork fresh meat will be a three-ringed circus—but most any kind of grub will be welcome to us now, seein' we're all about caved in in the middle."

"Why, Jack," exclaimed Nell in surprise and reproach, "didn't you have your breakfast?"

"Nary a whiff. We didn't wait—just hustled in with our catch. Anyhow, give us a swaller of coffee and a bite, and that will do until dinner."

"There's somebody missing," observed the girl. "Didn't some of you get lost?—oh, yes, it's Bill."

"Never fear for Bill," laughed big Jack. "He's a helpless kind of hunter, but he's on the way. His pack busted and scattered his whole outfit down there at the gully trail."

"I'll bet he's mad," remarked Nell.

"Mad!" said Jack. "Well, his language would need fumigation to introduce it to society."

Sure enough, a round of stormy objurgations was heard, like a coming thunder storm, as a stalwart miner hove in sight, perspiring under the burden of fresh additions to the larder.

"My, he's a-pollutin' of the air with a vocabulary that sounds like words of scripture," said the colored man, diving into the dining shack, a structure of rough tree trunks thatched with balsam branches.

"Oh, men, men, why can't you stop swearing?" cried Nell, in vague and indefinite protest.

"Any critter that's got such language as Bill's in him had best get it out," opined Jack, as the belated

one, with a crowning sulphurous outburst, threw his burden on the ground.

"Now you just stop swearing at me, Bill," commanded the girl, with wily assumption of personal injury and indignation.

"At you, Miss Nell—swearin' at you!" exclaimed the individual of explosive epithets. "Well, I reckon nit—nit by the jumpin' Jupiter!" and he proceeded with lurid language, involving sundry mythological references, to asseverate his innocence of the charge, until the sharp clang of the dinner bell interrupted his eloquence.

"Evelybody eat!" announced the Chinaman, emphasizing the tintinnabulation.

The appetites ranged around the rough board were able-bodied and vigorous, keeping Francis and his assistants busily employed in ministering unto them. Nell lent brisk, blithe aid at the function, humming as she flitted,

> "Far o'er the sea there's a dear litle island,
> Ireland they call it, a dear name to me."

"Chase the bread down to this end of the table, Dutch," said Jack, adding *sotto voce*: "A bird in the kitchen, boys."

"Yes," growled Bill, "and just cast your glimmers on that French hawk trying to catch it."

"You sing deliceusement, mademoiselle," commented Francis, as he darted to and fro. "Music, music—ah, for it I have ze grand passion!"

"You'll have a crick in the back of your neck in a minute, Frenchy, if you don't hurry up more grub," said the prosaic Bill.

"Grub—bah! The cooking of it goes not with the

artistic temperament," replied the dapper chief of the cuisine, as he shoved another smoking platter upon the table.

"I don't know how Frenchy will cash up on opera," gratefully remarked Jack, "but on slapjacks he's a winner."

Presently the steam whistle calling for change of shift sounded from the mine. The happy-go-lucky crowd arose like giants refreshed and began to move, joking and jostling, in the direction of the shaft.

"Hello, Jack. Good-bye, good-bye, everybody," called a tiny voice, as a small, chubby face appeared at an upper window of the shack. It was Nell's baby brother, Tim, the irrepressible, hopeful heir of Tom Naughton.

"Good-bye, kid," cheerily replied the big miner. "Come on, boys," he urged, "we're a bit late—things seem to go slow here when Nance is away. Let's see who'll win that five hundred dollar prize the boss says he'll hand over to whoever strikes the vein."

"And be sure some of you strike it, boys," shouted Nell, "and strike it soon; strike it today, strike it before those English people come—I mean the investors, the speculators—and they're on their way here now in the stage, coming as fast as four horses driven by Injun Bill can pull them."

Alas for her stimulating announcement, blissfully unaware was she of the fact that that redoubtable stage driver known to mining country fame as Injun Bill was at that moment supine in his bunk, sonorously sleeping the sleep of the unjust and in a state of utter indifference to the whole world, including gold mines and English speculators.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT THE LOST VEIN.

BEHIND the lively stir and industry of the Naughton mining camp there lurked a sense of uneasiness and dread, which found special resting place in the bosom of the proprietor. For, so far as the latter was concerned, the industry had ceased to be profitable. The valuable eight-foot vein, the rich bonanza which had given solid promise of the wealth of Monte Cristo, had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. Days, weeks had gone by without revealing any further trace of it. Hard work, time and money were being spent in strenuous effort to locate it, but all to no purpose. It seemed about as vain to look for any more gold there as for icebergs in the tropics, date palms in Alaska. Even while representatives of English capital, attracted by stories of its remarkable yield and greater promise, were on their way to purchase or invest in it, the Naughton gold mine seemed already to be a thing of the past, to have vanished like those of King Solomon.

There was, however, one individual who had his own ideas, solidly founded on inside information, strictly private and exclusive, on the subject of the mine. This was astute Ebenezer Langford, shrewd prospector, keenly enterprising and resourceful, of money seeking and money getting ambitions and methods utterly untram-

meled by scruples. He was overseer of the Cookoo mine, immediately neighboring the Naughton.

With satisfaction Ebenezer noticed the growing look of bewilderment and despondency on the face of Tom Naughton at the failure of each determined attempt to locate the lost vein. And in his active and untiring brain he conceived a certain promising scheme which he proceeded in glowing and seductive words to unfold to his friend Levy.

The latter, keeper of a local saloon, combined the business of dispensing "red eye" to the miners with interestedly watching the progress of the Naughton mine, in which he had sunk considerable money, continually and confidently advancing working funds to the proprietor for a consideration of ten per cent of the profits. Now that these had ceased to be forthcoming, with the additional prospect that they would come no more forever, Mr. Levy was prone to fits of gloomy rumination over the possible and probable loss of his investment. Nevertheless, he still retained with the uneasy owner of the mine a certain lurking hope that matters might turn out well. And in this frame of mind was he when he listened to the glittering representations of Ebenezer Langford.

"I tell you there's a cool million dollars in it for you, Levy," impressively whispered the latter. "Freeze out Naughton and the rest is as easy as falling off a log."

The saloonkeeper replied not for a time, neither did he fall off his log—for he was sitting on one in the immediate neighborhood of the Naughton cooking shack, now deserted, save where the almond eyes of Ching glittered in the doorway.

"Dot vould not be right business, mine friendt," he

at length said, slowly and deliberately. "I am a square man, Mr. Langford, even if I do sell whisky. Naughton has always been square mit me, and it would be a dirty game for me to throw him down."

"Well, then, suppose you stick to him—what'll you get?"

"I don't know; I'm no fortune teller."

"Friend Levy, I'll tell you what you'll get—you'll get left; you'll get nothing, you'll go broke. He's lost the vein of paying ore, and in three weeks of hard work he has been unable to find any track of it again. No, and he won't be able to find it in a thousand years in the way he's trying to. He's got an entirely wrong idea; he is altogether in the dark."

"Let me see," said Levy, "you vant me to cut off de cash so dot Tom, vitout money, cannot vork de claim; den ve combel him to sell de claim at your price. Dot's your proposition?"

"That is my plan exactly."

"But look here, mine tear sir, if Naughton or nobody can find de gold, vhat good vould de claim be to you or me or anybody else?"

A sensible and pertinent query, but Langford laughed. "It would be worth millions to me," he said, "the same to you, Levy, if you would only have sense enough to do as I advise you. It is the most foolish and ridiculous thing in the world for yourself and Naughton to continue this hopeless search, uselessly spending time and money. Your mine as it stands is not worth the powder to blow it to hades."

"Mine friendt," said Levy, suspiciously, "you haf just said dot it vas vorth millions."

"Yes," replied the overseer, "millions to me, to me and to nobody else, because I am the only one that knows where the vein of ore lies. And neither you nor Naughton can ever get near it the way you are working now. Still, Levy, I swear to you the ground we are standing on is rotten with gold! Come into the game and we can buy Naughton's claim for a song; then it will be an equal divide between you and me."

"You've got to show me," said Levy, still cautious, but palpably weakening at the enticing prospect. "Gif me proof dot you are telling de truth and I vill go you."

Langford could scarce suppress a yell of triumph; his wily assault on a vulnerable point had succeeded; his companion's strong cupidity had yielded to the golden bait; he was his.

"Your hand on it, Levy!" he exclaimed, and in confirmation of the contract of infamy they actually clasped hands in the fashion of manly and honest men, joined palms nervous with the itch for lucre, fingers eager as the talons of vultures in quest of prey.

"For about a year past, as you know, friend Levy," related Langford, assuming the confidence of a conspirator, "I have been overseer of the Cookoo mine, right alongside Naughton's claim, in which you are interested. I will take you down there and show you that the very vein, fully ten feet wide, that we are running now runs into and across the Naughton claim—not at the place where Naughton is searching, either. What he thought was a true vein was simply a big overflow from ours, and has naturally worked out. I have tried in every possible way to get the fellow to sell, but he doggedly refuses to give up. We will now try my way of bringing him to

terms—just to set to work and freeze him out, and that right away."

"Best make it right avay, den," coincided the saloonkeeper, now committed with full and eager zest to the scheme of fraud, "for some English investors are coming mit dere experts to examine de claim; maybe to put money in it, maybe to try to buy it out and out. Jerusha! mine friendt, dey're due here dis werry day."

Levy cast a glance of apprehension toward where the rugged trail, by courtesy termed a stage road, wound away along the precipitous brink of gullies whose depths were hidden in blue mist never shot through by the lances of the sun.

What if the eagle eye of an expert should find a lead in the claim and the whereabouts of the paying ore? The intending betrayer of his partner forgot that such a discovery would be to his own legitimate advantage and profit. That would be but of small account now; his avarice, inflamed by the representations of his companion, now ran to millions, millions!

"Oh, don't worry about the investors and the experts," advised Langford, with an exulting laugh, noticing with secret satisfaction the poignantly aroused interest of mine host of the Miners' Exchange. "There'll be no stage today, no investors, no experts. I fixed Indian Bill's liquor so that today he's beyond troubling about stage or horses, and there's not another man in these diggings that will dare to drive a stage over that gully road this time of year."

The dispenser of potent fluids cast upon his new colleague a look of surprised admiration. Truly a remarkably foreseeing, farseeing individual was resourceful

THE PLOTTERS.

Overseer Ebenezer Langford, of the Cookoo.

Still Levy betrayed some anxiety. He wanted further frills and details—a complete and well rounded plan, elaborate, impregnable.

"Believe me, mine friendt, in de best played game dere's a chance—if only chust a chance—for failure. Now, vat vould you do if de Englishmen manage to come here and examine de Naughton claim?"

"They mustn't examine it, that's all," promptly and positively replied the overseer, "not even if we have to close up the shaft."

"But how could you manage dot?"

"Quite an easy matter," exclaimed the man of mines, with a growing criminal enthusiasm that bordered on indiscretion. "When they started to mine they thought they were working on a surface vein, and whatever dumpings were taken out of the diggings were stacked right at the mouth of the works. When they lost the vein they sunk the shaft but still kept on dumping all around it until at last they had to put up timbers to hold back the stuff from sliding down on the shaft house. All we would have to do would be to loosen the timbers, and down come rocks and dirt, sweeping away the shaft house and blotting out the works. Then let the experts explore the claim—if they can."

"Good! beautiful! friendt Langford. Naughton himself has told me many times of de danger of dose dumps at de shaft house. Vell, I vill try and get him to sell, and if he von't, vy' ve will close him out, dot's all. But remember, mine friendt, a bargain's a bargain—ve will share half and half."

"Half and half I said, and half and half it will be," declared Langford.

Turning he started up with a muttered oath as he met the placid, expressionless gaze of Ching, who seemed to be standing unpleasantly within earshot.

"You yellow devil, what are you doing here? You get!" commanded the overseer.

"Evelybody eat," mechanically and irrelevantly remarked the celestial, and vanished into his kitchen.

"Ugh! but I vas a frightened man," gasped Levy, suddenly scared and pale with fear and guilt.

"Bosh! there's no need for worrying," remarked his more cool and callous co-plotter; "that fool heathen can hardly understand a word of English or American."

But the pair drew further away from the cluster of shacks and shanties to resume with better impunity their fascinating but critical conversation.

CHAPTER III.

THE SUBSTITUTE FOR INDIAN BILL.

IT was a blue time for the owner of the Naughton mine—rather the late Naughton mine. The bottom had suddenly dropped out of his world. He was the largest depositor at the closed door of a bursted bank. Fickle Dame Fortune had smiled upon him, coquetted with him, then suddenly and capriciously deserted him.

By nature cheerful, jovial, optimistic, full of the vigorous and abundant health of mind and body that comes from congenial work, wholesome surroundings and mountain air—such was Tom Naughton. He loved his wife and children, paid sympathetic attention to the wants and comforts of his employes, minded his business and smoked his pipe. He did not recognize trouble until he actually encountered it, and even then the recognition was an unwilling, languid and transient one.

"Time enough to bid the devil good-morrow when you meet him—and then sidestep him," was his favorite motto, demonstrated by frequent example.

In his robust wife Nance, goddess-like in physical and mental proportions—an animated statue from the studio of Phidias, a generous breath of ozone from the ocean—who had shared with him nigh two decades of storm and shine, he had a helpmate in whom the best part of his life was centered. Trials and tribulations they had met and smilingly ignored or overcome, until at length the

pearly gates of fortune seemed swinging open before them, inviting them to pleasant emerald fields and fragrant bowers of roses.

But now—

Well, the sordid strain of gold hunting is often somewhat calculated to turn an angel into a satyr. It takes a broad streak of philosophy to enable one to bear the shock and worry when a broad streak of rich paying ore drops suddenly out of sight, leaving one dismayed and mystified. So it was with Tom Naughton. His Hesperidean apples had suddenly, like Dead Sea fruit, turned to ashes on his lips, and the taste was bitter and sickening. Wherefore the droop in his shoulders, the drag in his walk, the dullness in his eye, as he came up the path from the mine, where he had been hard at work since before daybreak, vainly endeavoring to direct his men in their quest for the lost Ophir.

There was one conviction that sustained him in his disappointment and chagrin—the gold was there! In that he firmly believed. The only difficulty was to find it and get at it. The hunt for the auriferous ore had been going on for three weeks without a glimmer of success. It was a costly hunt, too. His own financial resources had been exhausted; his sleeping partner, Dave Levy, the saloonkeeper, was beginning to grumble at the growing prospect of "throwing good money after bad;" he was discouraged and discouraging. There was, however, a large and promising rent in the clouds: capital had become interested, and a party of intending investors were coming with experts who could not fail, the strong indications of more gold and plenty of it being properly considered, to make a favorable report. Then there would be

ample funds to work the mine, and everything would be rose-colored. This very day they were to be here, and would be but for a distressing and exasperating setback, the sudden incapability—to call it by no more painful name—of the driver of the stage, the only driver available.

"Oh, that twenty times idiot Injun Bill, to fill his thick skin with whisky just when he was most needed!" mused Tom. "But for his foolishness, everything might be fixed up this very day."

"Well, Nell, girl," he said, as his daughter appeared at the door of the shack.

"Why, father, how pale you look," she remarked. "Now, don't you be a bit worried about anything."

"I'm that worried, child, that I can't rest anywhere. I'm not sure, after all, that we'll strike the vein. This delay is gettin' on my nerves. Where's mother?"

"Mother's been gone all night—over to the Raffertys, I believe; they've got a new baby there."

"Glory be—another! That's the tenth."

"I've never stopped to count them," said Nell. "Mother told me not to worry if she didn't get back till late, as she had work to do, and plenty of it."

"Blessed little work, my girl, I'm afraid we'll have to do after to-day," remarked Naughton, despondently; "with the vein lost, and my money petered out, and Levy getting leary of putting in any more of his, it must soon be a case of closing down—that is, unless the English investors come."

"But surely they'll come, father," tentatively exclaimed Nell, in sudden anxiety.

"How can they, child, with the stage not running?

More like as not they've thrown up the whole business in disgust and gone back as they came, takin' their money with them. No man livin' would dare drive up that trail alone except Injun Bill, who knows every foot of the way and can do everything with a stage, barrin' to drive it up a tree; but the darned halfbreed is lyin' up there in his bunk crazy drunk, so stupid there's no gettin' any good whatever out of him. It's a kind of bad lookout, colleen, for the whole of us."

"Boss, dey're callin' for you down at de shaft," said Joe, the colored boy.

"All right, I'll be down there in a jiffy—maybe they've struck it at last," surmised Tom, with a swift awakening of the hope that springs eternal. "And Joe, you'd better look after the stage team—Injun Bill is layin' off for repairs."

"De stage hosses are done gone, boss," said Joe; "dey're not in de stable, and I don't see dem nowheres aroun'."

"Hunt them up, then, and feed them; they can't have strayed very far," said the mine owner, hurrying towards his dubious property.

"Dem 'ere hosses have got so used to goin' dat dey've done gone off without a driver," muttered Joe. "Dere's sumfin a-doin' roun' here, chile," he said, impressively addressing Nell, "sumfin curious a-doin' roun' here, suah's yo' bohn." And he shuffled off on a vague and uncertain mission to locate the missing steeds.

"Ah, goot morning, Miss Naughton; vhat fine vedder ve are having, ain't it," said a suave, insinuating voice.

It was Saloonkeeper Levy who stood before the girl, bowing and smirking and rubbing his hands.

"I want to have a little sensible talk mit you, Miss Naughton," he went on, sinking his voice to a portentous whisper. "You know, I believe, dot I haf much of an interest in your fadder's mine, dot I haf put much money in it, t'inkin' it vas a goot t'ing, a werry goot ting. Vell, dot's de werry t'ing vhat it ain't. Maybe you know dot Mr. Langford, de overseer of de Cookoo, is makin' a werry fair offer for it. Your fadder should accept dot offer vhile it lasts, else ve'll be left mitout a tollar. Your fadder is not a goot business man. He is holdin' out too long; he vill lose his chance if Langford backs out. Now, if you vould only speak mit him, for your adwice goes far—"

"Father has just gone to the shaft," said Nell, brusquely, "and if you are beginning to weaken you had better talk to him about it yourself."

"Poor father!" she added, "he is pretty well discouraged now, without having me help to further discourage him."

"Stop there, you, Tim—don't you dare attempt to come down that way," she cried, as Levy, muttering, shambled away. She had caught sight of her young brother proceeding, with nerve-wrecking boyish daring, to descend from his bedroom by means of the porch.

"You go right back there and come down the steps."

But her admonition came too late.

"Oh, you girls are all 'fraid cats; this is the way to come."

Tim came sliding down one of the wooden pillars. There was a sudden appalling sound of tearing.

"Oh, you bad boy, now see what you've done. Just you wait till mother comes home and you'll catch it as

you deserve. I'll have to fix that right away. You little villain, you're forever making trouble of some kind."

Industrious Nell dived into the house and presently emerged to do the needful, Tim enduring the operation with an occasional impatient wriggle.

"Oh, oh," he yelled, "you're pinchin' me, and you're stickin' the needle in me."

"Take them off, then, and get right back upstairs until I mend them." The injunction was promptly enforced, though reluctantly obeyed.

As was her wont, she sang as she worked, and as was often his wont under the circumstances, the Frenchman appeared at the door of his cooking shack and listened intently and with delight. Nell had a really fine voice, rich, clear, birdlike, and the former opera singer knew it and appreciated it. She herself was an ardent lover of music. Hers was a curious and perhaps grotesque accompaniment to the rather prosaic sartorial work in hand.

> "And the nymphs of the mountains laughed ha, ha,
> At the sight of the sun man's craft, tra la,
> And they danced and sang and shouted and ran
> As they chased the golden old sun-man."

"Beautiful, grand, magnifique!" exclaimed the enraptured Francis. "Oh, mademoiselle, you have ze voice of ze angels—so rich, so full, so sweet!"

And he danced around her in ecstasy, with all his fingers upraised and quivering in the air, much to the amusement of Tim, who was watching the proceedings from his window.

"Look out, Nell," yelled the sarcastic youngster, "it's a fit!"

"I tell you, mademoiselle—and I swear it to you—that you have ze voice of genius," went on her admirer, voluble, enthusiastic, apparently sincere, "ze voice of gold, with a diamond in every note. There is fame in it, and fortune. They dig and search here for ze vein of gold and find it not—ze vein of gold is in your voice. Ah, if I but had you in New York!"

He had a yearning, far-away look. The call of the stage was upon him—the music, the lights, the sea of faces, the applause. And she found herself joining in his abstraction and longing as she gazed on her surroundings—the great barren mountains, now no longer decked in mauve, crimson and violet, but looking bleak and dismal under the benumbing spell of approaching winter; the unlovely dumps of rock and clay torn from the gashed and scarred earth, the rude cabins and shacks, now suddenly grown squalid and miserable. The songbird, with waking instinct of flight for a congenial clime, was faintly beginning to expand its wings.

"I know ze business, ze profession; I am at home in it," resumed the impulsive Francis, musical, artist-chef, and by his own mysterious hint or statement, count. "With a little training your wonderful voice will create ze furore—sensation to ze public—houses sold out weeks in advance. Mademoiselle Nell, there is great future and fortune before you. Ah, when I have you in New York or San Francisco—"

"When you have—me?" exclaimed Nell, in amazement, not unmixed with a sense of secret rapture at the dazzling prospect so temptingly unfolded to her.

"When you have me, did you say, Francis?"

"Yes, you, of course—you stay not in this rough wild

place to sacrifice and lose yourself and that magnificent voice worth gold and diamonds. For me I go soon—I go soon, and I take you wis me."

"Well, I guess I will have something to say about that," dryly remarked Nell, abandoning the roseate clouds of imagination and ambition. "And now, Francis, getting back to sense, run along and get busy, for the boys will soon be looking for dinner."

"Oui, oui, but the boys will soon need somebody else to cook for them. Ah, if I might but tell you what I am! But suffice, I am a gentleman, I am ze artist, ze critic—"

"He's the whole blamed show," yelled the listening and cynical Tim, and a pillow hit Nell's self-proposed impresario on the head, putting an abrupt and humiliating end to the conversation.

"Oh, you bad, rude boy, take your pants and take care how you tear them again," and Nell dexterously flung through the upper window the oft-repaired article of juvenile apparel.

Meanwhile the argument between the boss of the mine and his financier had waxed close and strenuous—on one side assumed optimism and earnest appeal; on the other reluctancy and refusal.

"Belief me, Mr. Naughton, it is all to no use," declared Levy; "I can't and von't put any more money into de mine; I've reached de limit, see?"

"But it's a sure thing, Levy, that the gold's there," urged Tom Naughton. He spoke with a sinking heart, but assumed a hopefulness he was far from feeling. "Why, man, didn't we have the richest mine in the country?"

"Dot may be true, indeed, but vot have ve now? Mine

friendt, don't deceive yourself; your vein is all pinched out."

"No, Levy, it isn't pinched out; it's a drop. We've lost the vein, but it isn't pinched out. No vein ever pinched out eight feet in width. We have lost it completely, that's sure; but, Levy, I'd be the last man in the world to encourage you to sink good money in a worthless hole."

"Vell, dot's all right," said Levy, coldly, "but I don't like throwin' another red cent in it."

The boy Joe came hurrying up with a look of amazement bulging his eyes.

"Dere's some kind of hoodoo workin' roun' dis 'ere place, boss," he said; "I can't find dem hosses far or near, and not only dat, but de stage has gone, too, taken clean away!"

Unable to credit his ears, the mine boss impulsively seized the colored man by the collar and shook him.

"No shennanigan!" he commanded. "What on earth, Joe, are you tryin' to give me?"

"Sho's you live, boss, it's a fact—hosses and stage clear done gone, same as if de debbil took dem."

"Strange business this," muttered Naughton, in surprise. "Who could have done it? I've often heard of the holdin' up of a stage, but never of the stealin' of one altogether."

Levy's cunning little eyes twinkled with satisfaction; he felt he knew the cause of the strange disappearance of the stage and horses, and that he could put his hand on the individual responsible.

"Vell, Mr. Naughton, dot about settles it, don't it?" he said, "mit your stage and horses lost, strayed or

stolen, dere's now mighty little use in lookin' for de comin' of your English investors.

"Best take Langford's offer for de claim," he added, seizing what seemed the psychological moment; "best dake his offer and be done mit it."

"Langford knows very well that the vein is there," rejoined Tom Naughton with a miner's natural intuition, "and that's just why he wants the property."

"Tom, Tom, mine friendt, de gold fever has got you bad," sneered the host of the Miners' Exchange. "If de stuff is dere, as you say, vy don't you get it after all dose veeks' diggin' and searchin'? Anyhow, I can't put up any more money. Ve must either sell or close up de mine."

To a portion of the conversation Nell Naughton had been a privileged and attentive listener. She sighed as she laid her hand on her father's arm, but said with conviction:

"Father, I believe Mr. Levy is right. Better get a little than lose everything."

Tom Naughton, grown very grave, very worn and old-looking in a few minutes, hesitated, wavered. The toils had closed around him, there was no chance of escape; he felt himself being gradually forced, squeezed, frozen out of the anticipated reward of years of searching, toil and hardship among these wild mountains and canyons.

"I must talk it over with me wife," he said slowly. "Nance is me partner in this as in everything else. I'll do nothing without her advice—and you know her, Levy; she'll never give up while there's a hope in sight."

"Dot's only a vomman's notion, Tom," snarled Levy, "and vot do vomman's know about business and mining."

WITH A CLATTER OF HOOFS AND A RUMBLING OF WHEELS THE STAGE DROVE UP TO THE LITTLE MINING CAMP.

"You can't tell what a woman knows till you've tried her," retorted the other. "Anyhow, as it looks like the investors will fail us, I suppose there's nothing to do but sign the papers and let you do as you wish."

There was an exulting gleam in Levy's eye as he covertly slunk away to where his colleague, Overseer Langford of the Cookoo, was waiting eager, expectant, wolfish. To him Levy whispered:

"It's vorking like a charm."

Again the miners came pouring to their meal. There was the clatter of plates, the clang of Ching's bell, laughter and the clamor of loud-voiced conversation.

"Where in blazes is the mail?" casually inquired big Bill Hinckley, as, wiping his hands, he glanced in the basket in which was usually thrown the scanty correspondence of the miners and their few newspapers from the outer world. "It should be here by this time."

"That's right," concurred Bill's pal, Jack Dacey, "the stage is more than an hour late today.

But Dave Levy, the saloonkeeper, who, still hanging around, overheard the inquiries, chuckled.

"Stage nothing," he said; "there'll be no stage today, and no mail. Injun Bill is topheavy and hasn't left his bunk yet."

But the gaze of Bill was intently fixed on a speck in the misty distance, a moving atom on the far mountain side. He watched it as it slowly grew nearer and larger.

"Why, thar comes the stage now, you mutton head," he exclaimed. "Levy, you must be dreamin'."

Tom Naughton excitedly watched the approach of the vehicle that seemed to crawl along the meandering moun-

tain road. His fortunes seemed staked on that coming coach.

"It's the stage, all right," he said hoarsely. "But in God's name, boys, who is it that's drivin'?" For his eyes were dim with sudden emotion.

The crowd gazed earnestly.

"It's Injun Bill," was the general verdict, which was strengthened when was recognized the well-known garb of that expert holder of the reins.

"Then who was it I saw lyin' piped in his bunk not an hour ago?" wondered the mine boss, his heart rising with a great sudden leap of hope and thanksgiving as he noticed through the window of the stage a florid face, framed in gray mutton chops of a typical Englishman.

"De game's against us, Langford," muttered Levy with a curse.

With clatter of hoofs and rumble of wheels the stage drew up in the little mining camp. The four frothing horses were steaming with sweat. The body of the coach was scratched, chipped and splashed high with mud, showing all the evidences of a hard journey. One of the wheels was on the point of falling off the axle.

The driver, ponderously arrayed in broad slouch hat, shaggy coat and great boots, turned an amused gaze on the crowd.

"Well, boys, when you've finished rubberin' maybe some of you might have the dacency to help a lady to alight."

And there was a sudden shout of surprise and wonderment.

"It's Nance!"

CHAPTER IV.

A CLOSED SHAFT AND A CLOSED LIFE.

T'S Nance!''

So rang the cry of astonishment from the crowd of gaping miners, as the steaming horses and battered stage drew up at the Naughton mining camp.

It was a stalwart and good-looking matron, with eyes alight and cheeks aglow with the fire of exciting achievement, that eager, horny hands and hairy arms helped from the box seat to the ground.

''I've had the divil's own ride, boys,'' she managed to ejaculate between gasping and panting, ''and the back is nearly broke of me.''

Then, as she reached terra firma, the vivid color fled her cheeks, giving momentary place to a deathlike pallor, but the generous red blood surged back as she met the eager clasp of her husband's hands and glanced on the faces around her—tanned faces, lank faces, scarred faces, bearded and bristly faces, but wearing a general look of kindness and sympathy.

''The back is nearly broke of me,'' she repeated, pressing her hand to her side, as she leaned against the big shoulder of her very much startled husband. ''I'm purty near dead—not quite yet, me children, but only speechless.''

''Don't say so, Nance,'' ventured Bill Hinckley; ''your tongue is all right yet—blamed if it ain't.''

For Mrs. Anne Naughton, wife of the mine boss and co-owner of a property that might prove worth millions of dollars, was just plain Nance to the men of the mining camp. But woe to the man who dare attempt to overstep the limits of the free-and-easy social intercourse suggested by the familiar cognomen; more rigid than the etiquette of the court of Spain was, with regard to the decent female element, the unwritten but accepted and inexorable law of that rough mining camp in the foot-hills.

With a shudder she gazed backward on the road she had come, the rugged road running in and out among the hills and precipices, winding like a serpent and like a serpent dangerous.

"It's surprised I am to find meself alive," she said. "After this, Injun Bill can have his job all to himself—and I wish him joy of it."

"Here comes Bill now," remarked a miner. "He's just got out of his trance. Hi, Bill, wake up; your plate's broke. Here's Nance can run the stage every bit as well as you, and maybe better."

There was a howl of amusement and derision as the redoubtable son of Nimshi came slouching up to the crowd. He looked dazed, shamefaced, bewildered, as he gazed on the battered stage and steaming horses and especially on his self-appointed female deputy, who now proceeded to divest herself of his hat and coat.

"Take your togs, William," she said. "They were of mighty comfort and service to me up there on the box seat. Don't blame Bill, boys," she added; "it wasn't his fault that he missed his trip, but the fault of some mean sneaks who put up a dirty job on him."

Perhaps it was inadvertently that her indignant gaze rested on Messrs. Langford and Levy, causing these gentlemen to discreetly squirm out of her range of vision.

"Oh, Nance, however on earth did you do it?" inquired Tom Naughton, when husband and wife were left in their own company, the clang of Ching's bell having called the others to the dining shack.

"I don't know how I did it, Tom," she replied, "but I had to, and it's done. Often I thought it was my last minute, but the Lord brought me through with it, and here I am, safe and sound, and I've brought our guardian angel, the agent for the English moneyed people, and his daughter; and a nice old gentleman he is, and a purty girl she."

"We thought it was only over to the Raffertys you were."

"And so I was—for a while, helpin' to welcome the eleventh crature of them into this cruel world."

"Is it a boy or a child?" inquired Tom.

"A boy," answered his intelligent helpmate. "And, och, that poor, innocent Mrs. Rafferty! It's the angels that must think and provide for her. Would you believe it, Tom, that with all her large expayrience in family gettin', she hadn't a screed of baby linen ready in the house! 'Musha, Madge Rafferty,' says I, 'did you think the poor infant would come like a soldier, with a knapsack on his back, carryin' all his little clothes, so as to be ready to make a start all be himself, in this cruel world?'

"But about that great dhrive of mine. Let me tell you, Tom, that Injun Bill wasn't dhrunk—liquor never deadened any man like that—he was dhrugged with some

kind of dope. There's an evil hand workin' around here; there's a snake in the grass, there's dirty doin's and thrickery. And with that thought in me mind, fearin' that some cunnin' blackguards were thryin' to stale the bread out of me children's mouths, I says to meself: 'I'll let this camp see that no halfbreed Injun, either dhrunk or doped, is goin' to tie us up,' so I goes to the barn, brings out the team and hitches them up. Then, with the sign of the cross on meself and a prayer to the Holy Mother, off we goes."

"Couldn't—couldn't you have let me do it?" weakly protested her husband.

She laughed. "You?—if you thried it you'd be this minute lyin' at the bottom of a three-hundred-foot gully with the stage and horses on top of you. 'Tis little you know about horses and dhrivin', Tom, and the same way with all the rest. To put any wan of you on that box on such a road would be like settin' a Ballaghadeneen watchmaker on a buckin' broncho. It was a wild run, that! The gully is a runnin' river. In some places the road is part washed away. Big rocks rolled down from the mountain crowded us out to the edge of the precipice, with a mad torrent a hundred feet below. In one place young saplins had fallen across the road. Not for a second did I dare slack on the reins, and I drove blind —blind—for I dassent look down, and felt sick and faint when the stage leant out over the precipice, out over the white foamin' river."

Tom Naughton's face was pale. "It wasn't worth the terrible risk, Nance," he said. "It was the Lord brought you through."

"Badly I needed Him, then, Tom, and I fear badly

"IT WAS A DANGEROUS DRIVE."

we'll need Him now. There's a nervous feelin' all over me. Tom, I'm afeard!"

"Afeard?—you, Nance, after making that awful journey?"

"Oh, it's not the grand, big mountains I fear, nor the ragin' flood, nor anything of nature I can see," she explained with a shiver. "What I'm afeard of is something workin' in the dark, creepin' and crawlin' along like a serpent, until at last it springs out and stings you."

Tom looked at her in astonishment—she, vigorous and vivacious, full of animal spirits and courage, who had never to his knowledge known or expressed presentiment of ill.

They were sitting on a large log under a tall tree near their home, a russet carpet of fallen leaves under their feet. Through the half-stripped boughs softly moaned the wind, making lament for the dying year. On the horizon burnt the crimson sunset, and the flanks of the great mountains were seamed with glinting gold. The dreamy spirit of eve'n floated in the air, sweet as the breath of benediction. Perhaps it was this that brought the far-away look into the eyes of Nance and made her feeling of gloomy foreboding give place to one of tender reminiscence. Instead of the jagged cliffs and yawning gullies she beheld in memory the tender beauty and dreamy softness of her native vale, where the Avoca flashed through the glossy foliage as it glided to embrace the Avon.

"There is not in the wild world a valley so sweet
As that vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet.
Oh! the last rays of feeling and life must depart
Ere the bloom of that valley shall fade from my heart."

Unconsciously she murmured the words of the old melody—old but ever new—which she cherished as if Moore, in celebrating the beauties of her native place, had intended to pay her a personal compliment.

She looked with strange, newly aroused proprietorial interest on the man beside her. He had changed but little, she thought, since they parted from the old home, with their passage tickets for America in his pocket and their joint wardrobes packed in one large red trunk, their last impressions of the old place being the kindly faces and fluttering handkerchiefs of neighbors waving them adieu, and the spectacle of a white-haired mother, bereaved by emigration, fainting on the railway platform.

"It's well I remember the day I left the old home," she said musingly. "I walked alone to the crossing of the roads. It was springtime, and all the whitethorn hedges were in bloom. The air was full of the scent of them—of them and the yellow furze. The linnets and thrushes never sang so sweet before, and——

"But sure 'tis nonsense I'm talkin' to you, Tom—'tis not of yellow furze you're thinkin', but of yellow gold."

"I'm thinkin'," responded Tom, "of that self-same day you're talkin' about—how you put your hand in mine, and, says you, 'I lave all I have for the love of you.' I can see you as you were then—a purty little slip of a girl, ever so shy and timid. And to think what you've done today!"

"Oh, forget it," she rejoined airily. "But thank the Lord it's over. I'll be stiff and sore for a week. That time we left the old country I was only a dawny Irish

"IT WAS SPRINGTIME, AND ALL THE WHITETHORN HEDGES WERE IN BLOOM."

colleen, but today I'm a woman of the West, Tom, a woman of the West."

There were two pairs of eyes furtively watching them from the shadow of the pines, growing more shadowy in the gathering gloom, as the last streaks of sunset faded away and gray twilight descended on hill and valley. And presently the owners of those eyes moved stealthily towards the shaft house, into which one disappeared, while the other kept nervously on the lookout.

But their presence and actions were observed by a pair of keen, almond-shaped eyes. Ching, the Celestial, dodged from rock to rock and from tree to tree with the caution and alertness of a trained military skirmisher. He suspected evil, and later on he conveyed with much gesticulation and gibbering of pidgin English his suspicions to the mystified mine boss.

"There's something on the Chink's mind, Nance," said Tom, in a puzzled way, as the Chinaman danced and gestured before them and pointed repeatedly towards the mine.

"Velly bad men talkee," chattered the little Chinaman. "Velly bad men go to mine. Velly soon—whoosh! blang!"

"Are you crazy, you yellow divil?" demanded Nance. Then in sudden feeling of apprehension she cried: "Bedad, Tom, the haythen is on to some game. He's got wind of some kind of mischief or other. Best run down to the mine and see that everything is safe and secure."

"Sure, Nance, I will if you say so," he said; "but I believe there's no need of it and that I'll find everything all right."

"Better be sure than sorry," she persisted; "go on, man, I tell you. Don't take any chances."

And Tom obediently arose and proceeded to the shaft house.

In whispered conference with his colleague in villainy stood Overseer Ebenezer Langford of the Cookoo. He was trembling with excitement, pallid and nervous with guilt. His brow was wet with dishonest sweat.

"The job's done, Levy," he whispered.

"The job's done, the timbers are loosened, though I've risked my life in doing it. The least jolt—the least move—a breeze of wind—and down goes the dump, choking up the shaft. That English fellow will have but little chance of seeing the inside of the Naughton mine, at least for some time to come."

"You're sure dere's not any danger, Langford?" hoarsely inquired Levy, "no danger to anybody's life?"

"None whatever. There will just be a cave-in, a closing up, and that may come any minute."

"But if anybody should go in dere in advance?"

"I shouldn't like to be in his boots."

The saloon-keeper uttered a cry of alarm and made a sudden movement.

"Naughton!—I just saw him dis minute going towards the shaft!"

Langford's white face grew suddenly whiter.

"Don't be a fool, man," he growled. "What would Tom Naughton or anyone else be doing at the shaft at this hour?"

"Oh, there you are, Mr. Levy," said Nell Naughton, as she issued from the house and recognized the pair.

AND IN A FEW MOMENTS THE SOUL OF HONEST TOM NAUGHTON HAD FLUTTERED FROM ITS EARTHLY TENEMENT.

"Mother says they will want you tomorrow to go down in the mine with the English gentleman."

Levy shuddered.

"Dot vud gif me much bleasure," he said.

"He is not much of an expert, however," continued Nell; "he says that the real expert who represents his people will be here next week."

"Vill he indeed?" perfunctorily responded Levy.

There was a rumble as if of an earthquake, the clatter and thunder of falling rocks, the sound of smashing timber. The frame structure that stood at the head of the shaft was seen to collapse and disappear.

Then came a sharp feeling of alarm, a poignant sense of terror and doom. Men, shouting, ran to and fro. An excited crowd gathered at the ruined shaft.

It took long and hard work to extricate from its cruel and crushing load of debris the body of Tom Naughton. He was still breathing when the priest arrived.

Bitter was the grief of Nance as she folded in her arms the crushed form, late full of manly strength and vigor, of her husband, and laid his bleeding head on her lap.

"Oh, Tom, my Tom," she moaned, "and it was I that sent you to your death!"

"Keep the mine for the children, Nance," murmured the dying man. "Father, pray—pray, everybody."

And in a few moments the soul of honest Tom Naughton had fluttered from its earthly tenement.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEPARTURE OF NELL.

THEY had the home of Mrs. Naughton all to themselves, for she was away visiting with the Raffertys, with a kindly interest in the latest addition to that prolific family. And themselves were various of the energetic young people of that mining camp in midwinter, who sang or thought they could sing, or wanted to sing anyway, for lo! it was Christmas eve, and the natural music of the season, to which Christianity gives zest and point, was jubilant in every bosom.

Francis had a difficult yet congenial job on his hands —Francis the French *chef de cuisine,* Francis the vivacious and volatile, who, with the soul of music throbbing in all his pulses, had undertaken to rally and organize the available vocal talent of the mining camp. He was a musical artist himself—he had often modestly admitted it, and they ought to know and understand and appreciate his statement, which they would have cordially and unquestioningly done save for the unfortunate fact that once in a while he dropped a hint that he was a nobleman of France—"a count, or a duke, or something in that line"—which provoked dubious comments as to his veracity. A "four-flusher," some of them termed him.

He did not mind or seem to mind. His was one of those happy natures that ignore all comments or opinions, favorable and unfavorable. The volatile French-

man was on a pedestal of his own making, and he had made it of adamant. And on this particular evening he was specially exuberant of spirits, for he had received a gladsome message that called him back into the great outer world of thronging life, of bustle, mart and opera. But the joyous sensation of approaching departure from the dingy isolation of that cluster of shacks on the mountain-side, from his humble, greasy sphere of pots and pans, was tinctured with poignant regret as he gazed on the sweet face of Nell Naughton. As the hour of parting, for which he had so much longed in his sordid penury and crude surroundings, approached, he keenly realized that she had grown into his being. His prison door stood open, yet he was loath to flee. His beloved world lay before him, but to gain it he found he would have to desert a world that had grown unto him still more beloved.

"Gloria in excelsis Deo," sang the hastily improvised choir, and passers-by listened in surprise, marveling what was the nature or cause of the celebration in the home of Nance Naughton, owner of the Old Thunder mine, and what strange language was used by the singers.

There were blended the bass that rumbled from the deep chest of Jack Dacey, and the twittering soprano of pretty and imperious Kate Carleton, daughter of a neighboring mine boss, and proudly conscious of the consequent strength of her social position, and, clear and sweet as those of a silver bell, the tones of dainty Nell Naughton. Other songsters there were, about half a dozen, of high and low degree, who did their spirited best in response to the waving baton of Francis.

"Grand! perfection!" said the director, when the torrent of sound subsided. "I did not hope to have it so well. Yet some one in ze soprano is just a tiny bit flat. We will try, monsieurs and mademoiselles, ze last measure again."

"What—are we to sing it all over?" demanded Miss Carleton, resentfully.

"No, no, mademoiselle—just ze last measure."

"Why, that's all right," protested Kate, tossing her haughty head; "let's try something else."

"Mademoiselle, allow me to direct," suavely expostulated the Frenchman.

"Oh, dear! Some people cannot stand having authority," replied the daughter of the mine boss. "Well, do as you please, but"—with the eternal feminine instinct of revolt—"the 'Gloria' as we sang it is all right—isn't it, girls?"

There was immediately a divided house, enlivened with the shrill clamor of contesting female voices. Ching, the Chinaman, and little Tim Naughton, who sat together on a bench, were amused and interested auditors.

"Me sing," said Ching, and in an interval of the wordy war he emitted a few celestial squawks that attracted to him wrathful attention.

"Shut up, you yellow heathen," said Jack Dacey. "Your voice is enough to scare the blessed Christmas angels out of the sky. Now, girls, when you've quit scrappin' we'd better get down to business again."

"How many directors have we here, anyhow?" sarcastically demanded Miss Carleton, who was severely on her dignity. "I'd have you to know, Mr. Dacey, that if there's any 'scrapping,' as you vulgarly call it, going on,

I'm not in it. The ignorance of the lower orders is something abominable."

"I humbly beg your royal highness' pardon," replied Jack. "What you say about the lower orders is perfectly correct, and maybe based on experience."

Again Francis waved his baton, but the promising outburst of harmony ended in discord. The Frenchman gesticulated in despair.

"Parbleu! I have done my best with them," he muttered; "but I am glad I will not be in it tonight to hear."

"With all respect to your sublime vocal powers, it was you, Kate, that was draggin'," daringly said Jack, touching the female songstress on her tenderest point.

"The idea! How dare you! Anybody could hear it was Nell—she thinks she's the whole choir," retorted Kate, calling up the old green specter of jealousy between the rival belles of the camp.

"Well, this is surely a great rehearsal," said Nell, ignoring the dart. "Why can't we carry it on properly? Why don't you pay attention to Francis?"

"Oh, are you directing now?" inquired the daughter of the boss. "I thought you gave all the attention that was necessary to Francis."

There was a general giggle, under the fire of which Nell blushed crimson, while an angry light shone in the eyes of the Frenchman.

"Oh, break away, and go on with your singin'—or whatever else it is," said Jack.

"Well, make her hold her tongue, then," said Kate.

"But I haven't said anything," protested Nell, in surprise.

"Oh, smarty, you think you know it all," rejoined Kate, irately bent on a quarrel.

"I'm not pretending to know it all," said Nell, "but my ear is trained well enough to recognize discord."

"Oh, oh, we are in cultivated society!" sneered the scornful damsel. "No doubt you inherit your culture from your father."

Tears sprung into the eyes of poor Nell. There was a general murmur of protest from the girls. It was a crude, inartistic piece of insolence and the female mind resented it.

"How can you speak so of my dead father?" demanded Nell, with a portentous quiver in her voice which anyone but an excited and vindictive young female might have recognized with apprehension.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Naughton," icily retorted Miss Carleton; "your mother is such a man that I forgot your father is gone."

Nell made a leopard-like spring towards her tormentor, but a dozen arms, male and female, made timely interposition.

"'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing,'" quoted Jack Dacey. "Holy jumpin' ringtailed monkeys! is this a Christmas Mass rehearsal or a woman's suffrage meeting? You girls are worse than a bunch of wildcats."

The daughter of the mine boss turned upon him a glance meant to wither him out of any excuse for living. "I want you to understand, sir," she said, "that your remarks do not include me. There is an atmosphere of vulgarity here that one can feel like the plague of darkness in ancient Egypt. Come, girls, this is no place for ladies."

She hurriedly arrayed herself in her furs, and, followed by the young females of her following, went forth, halting on the threshold amid a flurry of snow to discharge a parting arrow:

"Miserable, low, shanty Irish—that's all."

"One minute singin' like angels and the next scrappin' like devils—I reckon it's the nature of the critters," commented Jack Dacey.

Nell Naughton seated herself wearily, a picture of distress and mortification.

"To think that she would dare insult my poor dead father," she murmured.

"Oh, she didn't mean anything," said Jack.

The girl burst into tears and leaned sobbing on the table. They looked at her sympathetically as they dropped out one by one. It was a dismal ending to the rehearsal. None lingered in company with Nell and her little brother but Jack Dacey and the Frenchman.

"It's always so—always so!" she exclaimed bitterly between sobs that shook her form. "Oh, I'm sick and tired of this place. I cannot do anything here, and mother won't hear of my going away. I wish I was dead."

Jack, with natural horror of a "scene," stood twirling his hat, uncertain whether it was the proper thing under the circumstances to go or stay. Francis, with a look of tender solicitude in his dark eyes, approached and laid a gentle hand on the shoulder of the weeping Nell.

"Why wish yourself dead? Because some of ze fools are jealous of you, jealous of your fine voice? Oui, come away from here; come wis me, ma cherie. Here nobody

understands your talent, nobody prizes your wonderful gift. In San Francisco it will be so different. Oh, if you would only come with me! For me, I start tonight."

"Tonight, Francis!"

She turned on him a look of startled inquiry. So the long threatened time had come; he was bound for the world of his thoughts, she for the now intensified wintry desolation of the mining camp.

"Ah, if you would but come with me; if I could only but make you see!"

She shook her head. "I am afraid, afraid. Mother would never let me go. She would be lonesome and worried without me, and she is the best mother that ever lived. No, Francis, I am tired of this place and I am almost useless here, but my duty is to remain and help her all I can."

"But you can help her a hundred times better in San Francisco. Your voice will bring you fortune, mademoiselle—I know it, I swear it. You can send her much money, you can come back rich, you can laugh at the silly people who call you 'shanty Irish.' "

Nell's manner changed, her face brightened.

"If I were only sure, oh, if I were only sure."

"Do not doubt me. Make up your mind and come with me to fame and fortune. Come with me, cherie, this very night!"

Hearing the last words Jack Dacey walked over, placed his hand on the Frenchman's shoulder and drew him aside.

"See here, Frenchy," he said, "excuse me for buttin' in, but I don't quite cotton to your game. Are you actin' square with this girl?"

"Fair and square, monsieur, fair and square."

Francis nervously dived his hand into his pocket and brought forth a letter which he waved as in triumph. "Here is ze proof in black and white, a letter from my friend, the manager of my old company. The second soprano, she is sick, and her husband, the leader, he will not leave her. 'Come quick,' he tells me, and I come, and if Mademoiselle Nell she come too, with her wonderful voice, her fortune is made; she will be queen of opera."

Jack read the opera man's letter, turned it over and over and did some deep and rapid thinking.

"It looks good to me," he said at length. "It's the chance of a lifetime. Nell, my girl, you might do worse than take it."

The psychological moment had arrived. Almost before she knew it she was darting about the cabin, collecting some articles of clothing and packing them in a satchel. Little Tim, unconscious of the momentous event afoot, looked on in wonder and doubt.

"The train goes at nine," said Francis.

"I will write a note to my mother," said Nell.

"Do so, cherie," he coincided; "she will understand that what you do is for her good and yours."

"And because I trust you," she exclaimed fervently, clasping his hand and gazing in his face with eyes alight with confidence and—maybe a warmer feeling.

Jack Dacey winced at the demonstration. "Two's company, I guess it's my move," and considerately going to the window he looked out on the snow sleeping in the moonlight, where the shadows of the rambling array of shacks and shanties fell athwart the street.

From the saloon of the Jew, Dave Levy, floated the sounds of revelry.

"Seems to me that Nance ought to be consulted in this affair," mused Jack, "though then, again, she might only stand in the girl's way and keep her at home. Anyway this looks to me suspiciously like a combination business expedition and runaway match."

Meanwhile Nell, hatted and wrapped for her journey, sat and hastily wrote, and tears fell on the paper:

"Dearest Mother—Do not ever doubt that I love you. Wherever I go and whatever I do, my heart is always with you. But I must leave you, at least for a time. I cannot do anything here to help either you or myself. I can earn some money and send help to you now when you need it so badly. It just breaks my heart to go, but it is only for a short time, and we will be together again. Believe me ever

"Your loving NELL."

The Frenchman was getting uneasy. Mrs. Naughton might return at any moment, and what then?

"It is near train time," he said nervously. For since Nance had made her memorable stage trip over the trail an enterprising company had sent a branch in this direction and the mining camp now boasted a shanty railway station.

"Once more I ask you, Frenchy," whispered Jack, "are you playin' a fair game or are your dice loaded?"

"As heaven is above us, monsieur," vehemently declared Francis, "I am doing what I think ze very best for ze lady. Nevaire would I deceive her. I will show you that I am an honorable gentleman."

"We ain't much on the grand gentleman business in this camp," said the blunt miner. "If you play straight well and good, but if the girl should meet harm or evil

through you the boys will follow you for revenge to the end of the earth. She ain't got no father, but she's got friends."

"Only wait and see," replied Francis.

"I'm ready," said Nell. She picked up her satchel and they issued into the moonlit street.

"Take me with you, Nell, I want to go with you," pleaded Tim, beginning to grasp the situation.

She stooped and kissed him. "No, Tim, you cannot go with us. You stay here and be good to mother. Good bye. And good bye, Jack, and say good bye for me to all the rest."

"Good bye, Nell, my girl, and God send you luck."

She turned to cast a parting glance on the rude log homestead, then burst into tears. "It's only a shanty, but it's my home," she said. Her companion gently urged her onward and they walked away down the street.

Little Tim gazed after them until they were out of sight, then re-entered the desolate house with a strange sense of loneliness aching in his young bosom.

Jack Dacey, not feeling entirely at peace with himself, slowly took his way to the lighted Miners' Exchange.

CHAPTER VI.

MATRIMONIAL NOTIONS ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

FROM the shadow of a shack near the Naughton home a pair of hawklike eyes watched the departure of Nell in the company and protection of her Gallic admirer and impresario. And presently the owner of those eyes issued forth from his lurking place and walked along the street toward Levy's saloon. It was Ebenezer Langford, overseer of the Cookoo mine, ever alert, inquisitive, plotting, restless as the spirit of evil.

On approaching the Miners' Exchange saloon the overseer was eagerly and rather brusquely accosted by its proprietor, who had left a one-eyed, stubby-bearded bartender to deal out fiery chain-lightning potations to a sextette of blear-eyed miners, husky of appearance and of voice, who were bellowing "Annie Laurie" in a way calculated to wither the green and dry the dew on Maxwellton braes and turn askew the swanlike neck of the celebrated fickle beloved of Douglas of Finland.

"Vell, how about de business now?" demanded Levy. "Vat's a-doin' and vere do ve stand? Haf you made any deal mit de Englishman?"

"There's no need to make any deal with him," replied Langford. "Bob Bronson will soon get tired of his job and back out; the money people behind him are getting sore and threatening to stop supplies. They are as far from the vein as ever. Only a little time more and it will

be a matter of freeze out, sell out, get out, and then the mine will be ours."

The mine, the Naughton mine, the Old Thunder mine, as it was called, was the main and absorbing subject of secret conversation and plot between these two worthies. To the present their wily and desperate essays in regard to it had been barren of practical or profitable results. The dastardly attempt to choke up the shaft in order to baffle or prevent expert investigation had failed. The fallen timbers of the shaft house had intercepted and checked the avalanche of rocks and clay from the loosened dumps, making it a comparatively easy matter to clear away the debris and reopen the workings and rendering abortive for the purpose of the perpetrators the villany that caused the death of poor Tom Naughton, whose widow, true to the promise made in his dying ears, stoutly refused to sell. Mr. Robert Bronson, shrewd representative of foreign capital, convinced by expert testimony of the presence in Old Thunder of gold in well paying quantities, was advancing the money necessary for the search for the lost vein, and he was encouraged in his quest by his gentle daughter Maud, who had gained large store of health, vigor and vivacity since her coming to the mountains. Matters were proceeding smoothly, though slowly, and to the tolerable satisfaction of everybody save Messrs. Langford and Levy.

"Vat if dey should strike de vein, Mishter Langford?" anxiously inquired the latter. "Dot'd be a awful bad business for us, eh, particularly for me. I had one-tenth interest in dot mine. You ask me to gif it up, to demand from de vidder Naughton pack mine money, so's I frighten and freeze her and get her to sell out. Vell,

she don't frighten or freeze a little bit; she gets me dot money somehow and pays me back, and now I haf dot one-tenth interest in dot mine no more. And you tells me dot mine vas rotten mit gold. Oh, Mishter Langford, I guess you vas misthtake."

"Well, you have another guess coming," retorted the overseer. "Have patience, Levy, and you'll find that we'll come out on top. What are you kicking about, anyhow? Didn't you agree to stand by me in this game?"

"I didn't agree to de murder, Mishter Langford," hissed the Jew, who was excited and irritable.

Becoming pale as Death on the White Horse Langford seized his companion violently by the throat and made as if he would choke the life out of him. Levy's face grew purple, his eyes bulged out. Suddenly Langford released him and thrust him from him with an oath.

"You fool! You idiot! If you ever repeat that word again mark me, there will be murder!"

"Don't get rough, don't get rough," exclaimed the elder man excitedly between gasping and coughing. "And don't get excited, friendt Langford. Remember ve are partners, and partners should nefer quarrel; it might be bad for either one or de other of us."

"Don't use threats, Jacob Levy; it will be mighty bad for you if I have reason to suspect you of treachery. Don't bother your wooden head about the mine or the vein or the Englishman or Nance Naughton. You may be all right at selling bad whisky or lending money at loan shark interest, but when it comes to mining affairs you must just take a back seat. If we can keep them off the vein the Englishman, Bronson, will soon get sick of his

job. Besides, there is another point; the girl, Nell, doesn't like the business; I believe she has lost faith in the mine."

"Dot reminds me of something I do often tink of," put in Levy. "Maybe now it might be a good ting for me to marry dot girl."

Langford glanced at the beaky nose and beady eyes, looking specially weird in the moonlight, of the man before him and gave vent to a laugh of derision.

"Marry Nell Naughton! Maybe, Levy, you might first take the courtesy and precaution of asking her, in case you feel any shadow of doubt that she might be able to resist your overwhelming fascinations?"

"Vy shouldn't she marry me? I haf an elegant saloon business, I haf much money out on loan at goot interest. And let me dell you, Mishter Langford, I haf a great way mit me mit de vimmens. Oh, laugh if it does you goot, but I tell you I am a great success mit dem always, a vonderful success."

"Well, Levy," laughed the other, "I must say that for an individual of your face and figure you have most stupendous and startling confidence in your personal attractions. If your appearance were equal to your ineffable gall you might successfully lay siege to any female heart—win an American heiress or a European princess. But I fear, my derelict son of Israel, your looks are dead against you; that alarming beak of yours would never serve as a pick to break into a lady's affections."

The saloonkeeper shrugged his shoulders and looked chagrined. "You may be makin' another mishtake in dot, but let me remind you dot effery eye forms its own beauty."

"The eye will have a mighty tough contract that will

form yours,'' impatiently snorted Langford. ''But let me inform you, my charming and irresistible creature, that you are a hopeless laggard in love when you think of Miss Nell Naughton. The bird is flown, the nightingale of the camp has flitted to more congenial spheres, and that without the formality of twittering good-bye. This very night—and I give you the news at reliable first hand —she has taken French leave, and with a Frenchman.''

''Mine gracious—de Naughton girl gone!'' ejaculated Levy in evident disappointment.

''Off to San Francisco with Frenchy. For some time he has been filling her head with the notion that she can make her fortune as a singer—and with her really fine voice I wouldn't be surprised if she made good. All the better for us that she's gone; when her mother finds herself deserted she may be more willing to come to terms and sell out.

''But whether she is or not,'' continued Langford, ''there is a sure way we can make both her and the Englishman surrender and get out. I failed before, I will not fail this time. Levy, I want to see you later on tonight on very important business—very important business, mark you, and of a remarkably critical nature. We will say in your saloon, after you close up, I mean—else it would not be exactly the place for private conversation and arrangement.''

''All right, mine goot partner, I vill meet you dere,'' responded Levy.

''You will find it will be to the very particular advantage of you and me,'' said Langford, and he went his way towards his cabin.

Wondering what new mysterious scheme was seeth-

ing in the brain of his fellow-plotter, for whose master-mind in scheming, no matter how infamous, he had much respect, combined with lurking fear of his possible anger and vengeance, Dave Levy retraced his footsteps through the snow towards his saloon, whence floated out on the wintry night the clamor of the carousing customers.

"Goot business doin' at de bar tonight," he muttered. "Pity I promised de priest to shut up early, because, as he says, it vas Christmas eve—and vat is Christmas to me, anyvay, dot I should turn away goot money from mine door?"

In the moonlight he beheld approaching the figure of a female. His keen gaze soon told him who it was; there was no mistaking those generous proportions, that independent swing, that tread elastic even in the snow. And swiftly an idea flashed into his head, born of his pachydermatous vanity, stimulated by his ever alert avarice. A way occurred to him by which he might settle the whole seductive and exasperating business of the Old Thunder mine to his own direct advantage and to the exclusion of Ebenezer Langford and all others whom it might or might not concern. David Levy, Jewish proprietor of the Miners' Exchange saloon, with a money lending industry on the side, was by no means of prepossessing appearance; on the contrary he was decidedly ugly, with sharp and cunning little eyes glittering beneath shaggy brows, a curving beaklike nose and large standing-out ears, in front of which dangled black little Disraelitish ringlets. But many are the ugly men, including noted celebrities—men of brains and force of character—who have successfully besieged the heart of woman. Julius Cæsar, far from beautiful, with a distemper in his

head and subject to fits of epilepsy, was the idol of the maids and matrons of Rome, who were heartbroken when he fell beneath the swords of the conspirators. Sir Philip Sidney, pink of Elizabethan chivalry, whom women adored, was plain to a degree of homeliness. Pietro Aretino, the licentious satirist of the sixteenth century, who was as devoid of comeliness as of decency, was a wholesale heart breaker. Paul Scarron, the wit, crippled of person and ugly of face, had little difficulty in winning the hand of the beautiful Francoise d'Aubigne, afterwards Madame de Maintenon and virtual ruler of France. Baron Friedrich von der Trenck, whose passion for the sister of Frederick the Great involved him in lifelong troubles and who was an immense favorite with the ladies, claimed that he owed his success with them to his uncompromising ugliness. Voltaire, Rousseau, John Wilkes, Mirabeau, Jonathan Swift—the interesting procession of distinguished ugly Don Juans, darlings of the emotional sex, moves onward through the centuries. If Dave Levy had not the quality of distinction he certainly had that of ugliness, enhanced by deep confidence in his attractiveness and the complacent conviction that, as he had told Langford, he "had a great vay mit de vimmens."

"Dot Langford is a bad man, a werry bad man," he mused; "if it wasn't for business I'd never associate mit de fellow. He's reckless, dangerous. But I tink I see a vay to settle de whole business to suit mineself."

"Ah, goot evening," he said with profuse cordiality, courteously doffing his hat—the only silk one in camp and ventilated at both sides by holes made by the re-

volver bullet of a facetious miner. "Goot evening. Vat a pleasure! Is dot you, Mrs. Naughton?"

"Sure, no," responded Nance airily, "it's only me shadow."

She had been over, led by the dictates of her generous nature, administering true Christian charity to the Raffertys and performing other motherly offices for the rest of the numerous progeny, offices which the mother *de facto* was for the time being unable to satisfactorily perform.

"Only your shadow, you say. Aha, you make me a great joke, Mrs. Naughton, a great joke," said the saloonkeeper, with a melancholy and unwonted attempt at cachinnation.

"Make you a great joke, is it?" said the widow, with an amused look. "Arrah, no need of me to do that, nature has got ahead of me."

And she would have continued onward to her cabin but that he stood resolute in her path—resolute to speak, hesitant as to what to say.

"It's a werry cold vedder dis evening," he ventured, sparring for an opening.

"Well, it's no fault of mine," she said, making it appear to him even colder. "Troth I'm so busy, Mr. Levy, attendin' to me own business that I'm inclined to let nature run the weather. So, good night."

Plainly Nance was not in conversational mood just at that time and plainly she did not appreciate his social and neighborly advances. In fact, when, in response to his demand, made to embarrass her and discourage her into selling, she, to his surprise and disappointment, managed to pay him the money that he had advanced her

late husband for the working of the mine and which had entitled him to one-tenth interest in it, she had decided to have as little as possible further to do with Dave Levy, financially, socially, or otherwise.

"Mrs. Naughton," he persisted, "I'm werry glad to meet you."

"In troth I can't return the compliment," she retorted.

"Now, now, I'm not as bad as you tink me."

"If you're as bad as I believe you are you're proper place is there"—she pointed significantly downward—"and not in a civilized country."

"Ah, is dot vot you call charity?" he pleaded, spreading his palms appealingly. "Vy should ve not forget and forgive on dis beautiful Christmas evening? I vant to be your friend and more than dot. Let me tell you, Mrs. Naughton, you neet me."

"Need you? " She swept him from head to foot with a contemptuous glance. "I'm not runnin' a curiosity shop."

"You need me vorse dan you tink. And let me dell you too, no matter vot peoples say, I am a goot man."

"You might pass for a man if you were made over," she exclaimed impatiently. "What the divil's the matter with you this blessed night? Have you got drunk, Levy, on your own cutthroat whisky? You'd better go back to your booze shop and make some ordher and quietness on Christmas eve among your poor fools and victims," she said, as a gust of bacchanalian uproar floated from the Miners' Exchange.

"The boys are lively tonight," he said. "I suppose 'cause it's Christmas time, and just 'cause it's Christmas

time I'm goin' to close up early tonight—I promised de priest I vould. But, Mrs. Naughton, dere's someting in my heart dot I've long vished to tell you—it's dot I vant to be your particular friendt, your protector and guide. You understand?

"No, I don't. You're like the Dutchman the boys hung for horse-stealing—he had plenty to say, but his English wouldn't hold out."

"Listen to me now, Mrs. Naughton," laying an impressive detaining hand on her arm as she made another attempt to pass him by. "You better haf me as a friend than an enemy. I can direct and adwise you; I can put up de money to vork de mine; I can—vell, you neet me, and I vants you to marry me."

"To marry you!"

Levy suddenly found himself lying on his back in the snow. His bullet-hole ventilated silk hat fell off in his fall. The widow dealt it a kick that sent it dancing across the street, and then swung leisurely on her way, singing, as it seemed to him, rather irrelevantly and callously:

> "It's the relics of ould dacincy,
> It's the hat me father wore!"

With a spluttering storm of imprecations on the foolishness and obstinacy of females in general and of the Widow Naughton in particular, Dave Levy picked himself up, brushed the snow from his clothes, recovered his outraged headgear and proceeded to his saloon.

CHAPTER VII.

NOT AS THE ANGELS SANG IT.

SHAKING with suppressed laughter at the discomfiture of her suitor, Nance Naughton lifted the latch of her cabin and entered. Her amusement was, however, tinctured with regret. She began even to feel shame for her sarcastic words, her impulsive act and its results. She had not intended to lay her Jewish admirer, as she had left him, prone on the cold white carpet of winter, but merely to shove him aside so that, rid of his importunities, she might resume her way home. The thought of kicking his silk hat—the most aristocratic head covering in camp, although it attracted casual indignation, ridicule and bullets—also caused her a passing qualm. No matter what Levy's faults or what the underlying reason for his sudden proposal, he had offered her his hand in marriage, which was the extremest compliment for a man to pay a woman.

"Bedad, it was a quare way to thrate a man that wants to marry you," she said to her *alter ego*. "Nance Naughton, my dear, I fear you didn't act like a perfect lady."

But on entering the house the recent incident speedily became one well past and forgotten. She encountered silence, darkness, cold. She felt astonished, alarmed. With nervous fingers she groped on the shelf where the matches were, and finding them, she hurriedly lighted the lamp. She turned to the stove; it was almost cold,

with a few dull red embers dying in the bottom. She looked at the rough wooden table; it was clothless and bare.

"No fire in the stove, no supper for me—what undher the blessed heaven is the matter?" she exclaimed. "Maybe 'tis that the children are gone to the church; but Nell would never thrate me this way. Nell, Nell, don't be jokin' with me. Where in the world are you?"

For answer, little Tim, aroused from his light, childish slumber, came running out from an inner room.

"Oh, mammy, mammy, I'm glad you're back; it was awful lonesome here all in the dark."

"Where is your sister?"

"Aw, she's gone," answered Tim, with juvenile inappreciation of the matter, "and wouldn't let me go with her, either."

"Gone where, at this hour of the night?"

"Glon on smoke tlain," volunteered Ching, who, hovering around the cabin, had entered on seeing the light.

"Gone away with Francis," said Tim. "There's her letter on the table."

"A letter, and from her to me?" ejaculated the widow. "Well, well, it's mighty stylish we're gettin' entirely, writin' letters to one another." She picked up the telltale missive and examined it curiously. "What a purty hand she writes! Ah, well, I did all I could to give her an education, for I remembered the thrue ould sayin':

> "'A man without learnin' and wearin' fine clothes
> Is like a gold ring in a barrow pig's nose.'

And the same way, of coorse, with a woman. I wonder

what she has to say, but sure I won't know unless I open it."

As she read the few lines of farewell her eyes grew misty, her temples throbbed, her heart beat furiously. Snatching up her shawl and bonnet from where she had thrown them, she made a movement towards the door.

"Smoke tlain all gone," said Ching.

"My girl, my poor, foolish little girl!" moaned the forsaken mother, and under the burden of her new poignant shock and sorrow she sank on her knees by the table. "To think that at this holy season she'd so cruelly desert me to go into the great, wide, wicked world that she knows nothing about! Gone with Frenchy, too! I often thought him a fool, with his grand airs and his musical notions, but never that he was such a rascal as to steal away an innocent child from her mother. I'll follow them, follow them to the end of the earth, and bring her back—but wirra, wirra, what can I do—a poor, helpless woman! God help her, keep her pure, keep her innocent!"

Her sobs and tears brought a tiny childish arm around her neck.

"Don't cry, mammy; I won't leave you," said plucky Tim, the comforter. "Pretty soon I'll be a big, big man, and I'll stick to you always—see if I don't!"

"Ay, acushla, acushla, sure you will, but now 'tis but little you know!"—and her tears fell on his clustering curls.

"Me solly, too," said Ching, his face showing the concern and sympathy that his limited vocabulary failed to express.

The kin-making touch of nature brought Nance to her

feet, wiping the tears from her eyes and struggling valiantly to regain her natural optimism.

"Faith, me boy," she said, "I do believe you've got a good kind of heart undher yer yellow coverin'."

At this moment the door latch rattled and Mr. Bronson entered. Ching arose and took his departure, but first, having recognized in the newcomer one whom he somehow surmised to be a kind of business partner of his mistress, he made some rapid, mysterious gestures and portentously whispered:

"Men makee talkee. Evelybody stlike."

"Strike—what's that the Chinaman said?" Nance felt her question to be perfunctory and unnecessary. Her suspicion was immediate of a fresh source of trouble and annoyance, and it was confirmed by the mien of her visitor. The florid face of Robert Bronson, representative of capital, was now almost purple with excitement; his gray hair and side whiskers seemed to bristle with indignation.

"Ching is quite right," he said. "There is much danger of a strike at the mine. It is the work of Langford and the Jew. That pair of restless, vicious, indefatigable scoundrels seem bent on making for us all the worry and bother they can. They are doing their evil best to create discontent among the men. Their great opportunity will come tomorrow, you understand—an idle day, the Miners' Exchange, plenty of whisky and appeals of cunning agitators to muddled brains."

"It's a bad business," said Nance, and again she thought with uneasiness of her brusque rejection of her saloon-keeping suitor.

"I understand," continued Mr. Bronson, "that you

have ordered all the men laid off tomorrow, Christmas Day."

"Yes, that is right," replied Nance. "I will never consent to any work on Christmas Day. I gave orders to let the night shift go in time to let all who wanted attend midnight Mass and for no work to be done in the mine all day tomorrow."

Mr. Bronson looked grave and shook his head. "It will never do to let the men run idle, subject to the wiles and arguments of the enemies that are trying hard to ruin us. Mrs. Naughton, you must go to the mine, countermand your order, and keep the men at work tomorrow at all hazard."

But Nance in turn shook her head. "No, Mr. Bronson! What—work all day on the holiest day of the year? I have lost my husband through the craze for gold. My only daughter, sick and tired of the draggin' life, has left me this blessed night. But, sir, I'll not slight me faith nor neglect me God for all the mines in the world —no, sir!"

Bronson made a gesture of despair. "I respect religious principles," he said, gloomily, "but if the men are allowed to run idle tomorrow, believe me, we'll never open the mine again. It will be good-bye to Old Thunder."

The woman, determined, was starkly silent. Bronson looked at her in dismay as at a most perplexing problem. Englishman though he was, he recognized the extreme difficulty of the situation; the Celtic religious ideal, molded throughout long centuries and crystallized in the rigors of persecution, stood before him like a mountain of adamant. A man of tact and resource, however, he

proceeded to assail her formidable barricade of principle in its most vulnerable point: he would appeal not to her own personal interests, but to those of himself and the investors he represented.

"Please listen to me," he pleaded. "If the men strike, I am ruined. I have stuck by you and the mine and have foolishly far outstepped my authority by putting up extra money, in hope of soon striking the vein, which I have good reason to believe is there. If this strike comes now, I can deceive the investors no longer. They will put up no more funds, and I shall be severely blamed for the risk I have taken and the money I have lost. For heaven's sake, then, Nance, go to the mine and make a new order. By all means, let who will go to midnight Mass, but I beg of you to have the work going on at daybreak. The need is desperate. Think of my position in the matter, if not of that of yourself and your children."

She hesitated, weakened, surrendered.

"Little did I ever think," she said, with a sigh, "that I'd consent to have men work on Christmas Day! Very well, Mr. Bronson, for your sake I'll do it, though sorry I am I should have to."

"Good! bravo!" exclaimed Bronson, relieved and delighted. "We will close the mine at midnight and resume work early tomorrow. Nance, I hope your prayers will help us. And now, good-night, and I wish you a merry, merry Christmas."

"The same, from the depths of me heart, to yourself, Mr. Bronson," answered Nance.

"Merry Christmas, indeed!" she thought, sadly, "with not a dollar in the house. In her unstinted pity

and charity the owner of Old Thunder had left about her last coin with the prolific Raffertys; she was approaching the great Christian festival of rejoicing and good cheer perhaps poorer than the poorest of her employes. Money she could have on the instant by borrowing from Robert Bronson or someone else, but independent Nance was not of the borrowing kind.

"Oh, mammy, this is Christmas, and you never told me," exclaimed Tim. And he commented disparagingly: "It's a bum Christmas."

"Ah, avourneen, it's not what it was a year ago," said his mother, sadly, and her eyes filled with tears as memories of happy Christmases passed before her like brilliant lights on a procession of Christmas trees. "I didn't want you to know it was Christmas, Tim darlin', with nothing to make Christmas what it used to be. Oh, if your father could only see us now!"

"Don't cry, mammy; don't cry," consoled plucky Tim, hastily. "I don't care for no Christmas. Only babies cry for Christmas and presents and things—and tops," he added in spirit of noble self-abnegation, showing where was centered his modest season's desires.

"That's my brave little boy," she said; "you'll be a big man and forget all about tops and help your mother. And now, darlin', we must get a little rest before the midnight Mass."

"Aw," protested Tim, "let me stay here and watch for Santa Claus."

"I thought you were goin' to be a big man and not care for Santa Claus tonight."

"Well, I am," he declared, adding diplomatically,

"but he might come, mammy, and it won't do any harm, anyhow, to hang up a stockin'."

The Christmas eve ceremony was duly performed. The small stocking was suspended from a nail back of the stove, and mother and child retired to the bedroom, the former thinking poignantly of a bleak Christmas morning disappointment, an unavailing search, an aching void.

"Well, the Lord be good to us," mused Nance, pausing, lamp in hand, to glance mournfully at the tiny piece of footgear, darned heel and toe, so appealingly, pathetically, hopelessly waiting, "this is the quarest Christmas eve I ever seen in my life. My husband dead—my daughter gone—the mine not producin' and in danger of closin' —poverty and desolation in the home. Long ago, on the first Christmas night, the angels sang: 'Glory be to God on high and on earth peace to men of good will.' I wondher were women included in that. For somehow Christmas doesn't seem to come to me tonight the way the angels sang it."

CHAPTER VIII.

A VISIT FROM SANTA CLAUS.

RELUCTANTLY the last group of players flung down their cards on one of the little round tables nigh the hot stove in the Miners' Exchange, in tardy obedience to the unwonted admonition of the proprietor. Perfunctorily they lined up at the grimy bar and quaffed their final pungent potations, dealing out sarcastic healths, thanks and congratulations to the unlucky one who was "stuck for the drinks," who retorted in kind, exchanging with them barroom banter and rugged repartee, each point and parry being greeted with yells of laughter.

Reluctantly, too, when the last reveler had stumbled across the threshold into the biting air of the winter night, did Saloonkeeper Levy proceed to extinguish his smoky oil lamps, preparatory to closing up his "place" for the night. The floor was strewn with cigar butts, the "place" was rank with the fumes of stale beer and uncleaned cuspidors.

"You can go, Sam," he said to his one-eyed, stubby-bearded bartender, who was in a state of semi-coma from the effects of much treating and lack of sleep; "go right to your bunk and sleep sound, my poy, and be 'round early in de mornin', 'cause you know ve vill haf great doin's round here tomorrow all day long, great doin's and goot business."

And Sam drowsily, yet willingly, doffed his soiled apron and took a final drink and his departure.

"Closing up rather early," remarked the overseer of the Cookoo mine, who, after seeing the last reveler depart on his zigzag way, had made a quiet and furtive entry, a heavy, black leather satchel in his hand and a brand new plot seething in his brain. He gingerly placed his satchel on the bar, and made sure that the door of the saloon was locked.

"Yes, I promised de priest to close up a bit early to-night, so de poys might go to church," replied the Jew.

"Well, I'm blamed. Are you getting religion, too?"

"Do I look it, Mishter Langford?"

"Is your saloon an annex to the church, and when did the priest begin to run your business?"

"He's not runnin' it," said Levy with a grin, "but it's goot business for me to make him belief he's runnin' it. Nefer quarrel mit de church, mine friendt. Maybe I don't know vat powers Father Malone has mit God, but he's kind of strong mit de poys."

"Good business and great doings here tomorrow you say, friend Levy. Drunken and discontented miners going on a strike, I suppose you mean. No such luck, my Apollo Belvidere."

"Vat you mean, man?" inquired Levy. "Hafn't ve near talked de men of de Naughton mine into strikin' for petter wages, and hafn't ve a big chance of pullin' off de strike tomorrow?"

"Chance nothing. Bronson and the widow have got wind of the affair, and the mine will run as usual tomorrow, just to prevent us giving the fellows a final talking

to and to prevent them from drinking themselves into sufficient discontent. Our hopes in that direction are about *nil.*"

"Vat—vork de mine on Christmas Day! And dey call demselves Christians! And my business for de tay vill be ruined. And dere vill be no strike. Oh, such luck; such dirty luck!"

"Strike or no strike, we must close up the Naughton mine, if we are to get hold of it, and close it up this very night," said Langford in a low, determined voice. "The old way is the best. If we failed at it once that is no reason why we should fail the second time."

"Vat, more schemings?" said Levy dubiously. "I don't quite like dis business. Vat old vay do you mean?"

"To choke up the shaft, of course," answered the overseer. "I bungled the job the last time, I admit, and——"

"Yes, and caused de death of—" Levy checked himself, noticing the swift, menacing glare in his companion's eye.

"None of that, you hound! Remember, you are with me in this game, and you must stay to the finish. The rope is as tight around your neck as around mine. If you fail me, my good Hebrew friend, it will cost you dear."

Levy grew pale. His beady eyes looked about as if for a means of escape from this dangerous colleague—persistent, reckless and desperate.

"Take a look in this satchel, Levy," continued Langford, opening it as he spoke and revealing a round, dark metallic object, at sight of which the saloonkeeper recoiled in mortal fear. "Yes, it's a bomb. There's

enough there to blow you and me to shreds and to wipe most of this camp from the face of the earth. Well, this is the sure key that's going to lock up the Naughton mine tonight—lock it up so tight that English or any other capital but our own will despair of reopening it. Now, you understand?"

"It is a great risk, a terrible risk," muttered the saloonkeeper; "it is sure hangin' for anyone caught at it."

"There is no risk, and no one is going to be caught. Listen, Levy. That fool woman closes the mine tonight. At twelve it will be deserted. I have a key for the shaft house, so we shall not be suspected. We will show ourselves at the church, then slip out during the services and place this, with a time fuse attached, where it will do us the most good, then return to the church and quietly await developments. Pretty simple, isn't it—simple and sure?"

"But vat is de use?" protested Levy. "Dey vill open up a new shaft."

"Oh, no, they won't," confidently declared the overseer, tense and alert with criminal cunning, "they are at the end of their financial tether; if we close the shaft tonight it will never be opened but by us—and then—wealth and prosperity."

"Be careful, Mishter Langford, how you handle dot infernal thing," begged Levy, with an uneasy look at the black satchel.

"Don't be afraid," laughed the other; "this is our particular and reliable little friend. And now you might take a drink of your own chain lightning to banish your nervousness and prepare us for the work before us."

"De vork pefore us!" repeated Levy, with a quaver of the voice and a shaking of the knees, and he secretly and sincerely wished himself many far removes from his companion and the black satchel.

Meanwhile, out in the snowy street snatches of song floated on the air, as, sauntering along, came Jack Dacey, big Bill Hinckley and several of their husky mates.

"Good night, boys," said a gentle, cheery voice.

It was Father Malone, on whom devolved the care of souls—and an onerous and perplexing care it sometimes was—of members of his faith, and incidentally of those of other religious beliefs, in that rude camp among the mountains. His humble church of mud and stone, with roof of logs, and quaint, small belfry tower, was the most imposing architectural feature of the place. Lights now gleamed inside, and through the open doorway came the voices of those who were giving the interior a Christmas decoration of evergreens.

"I do hope to see you all at church tonight," remarked the priest. "Whatever a man may be all year, Christmas should recall something good in his past."

"I reckon you're about right, pard," concurred big Bill; "I don't go much on religion nowadays, but you bet I warn't always so."

"I never thought, your reverence, until you came along here that religion had so much horse sense in it," was the tribute of Jack Dacey.

"I'm glad if you think I have helped you. I tell you the true office of religion is to help the poor and raise up the weak."

And the clergyman entered the church.

"Who's that fellow, and why is he prowlin' around

there?'' inquired Bill, his attention attracted by a figure that was mysteriously hovering round the Widow Naughton's cabin, now appearing to listen at the door and again attempting to peer in at a window.

''He's up to some mischief, durn his skin, whoever he is,'' said Bill.

''Blessed if it ain't the Chinaman,'' said Jack. ''Hi, there, you yellow terror, what in thunder kind of divilment are you up to this blessed night?''

Chattering what seemed to be disgust and disappointment, Ching nimbly endeavored to elude them, but strong hands seized him and held him fast despite his writhings and gesticulations. From beneath his garments dropped a spinning top, a ball and sundry other items that are of high vogue among childhood at Christmastide.

''Clistmas things for Tim,'' he explained.

The miners looked at each other in amazement.

''Well, I'll be shot!'' ejaculated Bill. ''The Chink a-practicin' Christian charity! As sure as you live we're dummies. Here we are talkin' about religion as spry as you please, and doin' nothin', and the Chink comes and rubs it in.''

There was an outburst of admiration for the Celestial. The horny hands that had so roughly seized him were now patting him approvingly on the back.

''The joke's on us, boys,'' said Jack. ''Seems to me we ought to take a lesson from him. I happen to know a certain deservin' party, and, although she's owner of a mine, I have reason to think she hasn't a dollar to her name this blessed night. And here's where we come in.''

''I'm on,'' was the general chorus.

There was a plunging of hands in pockets, a rustling of bills and jingling of silver. Big Bill disappeared, and presently appeared holding a plump turkey.

"I've swiped it from Levy," he candidly explained, and the questionable ethics of the proceeding were blankly ignored.

"This is a purty good jackpot," remarked Jack, "but money ain't Christmas. There's something missing for the kid."

"Candy? Bud Shaw will give the candy—won't you, Bud?" said a miner, and from Mr. Shaw's store a couple of boxes of the commodity were promptly forthcoming

"There's one more thing necessary; very important, indeed, if this affair is to be conducted on regular principles. We need a Santa Claus to deliver the goods. Who'll be old Santy?"

"Bill, Bill," was the cry. Bill, the brawny and hirsute, abashed and reluctant, protested.

"Oh, I ain't no kid, and not up in kid's games. Besides, how in the thunderation am I to get in the house. I ain't no burglar."

"Window—I leave window open," said Ching.

"By cracky, you're a good one," approved Jack.

"Unless we leave a note Nance'll be afraid to use the money," said the elected Santa Claus.

After much searching a pencil butt was procured, and on a piece of paper torn from the package of toys was inscribed with some difficulty: "From old boys who are young tonight." Then the group separated, its individuals secreting themselves in various nooks, while Bill cautiously opened a window of the Naughton home and quietly introduced his burly form into the interior.

Once inside he held his breath and felt like a criminal. He struck a match on his trousers and by its flicker took in his surroundings. He laid the money with the note on the table. He recognized the appeal of the suspended stocking, and appeased it by filling it with candy. The toys he deposited on the floor beneath. So occupied was he in his work that he failed to notice a small form that was attentively watching him from the door of the bedroom until he was startled and terrified by a boyish cry of surprise and gladness:

"Mammy, mammy; Santa Claus, Santa Claus!"

With a bound Bill was at the window. In a second he had one leg through it and was squirming desperately for liberty, when he found his leg grabbed by unseen hands.

"Come quick, mammy, I've got him. Oh, Mr. Santa Claus, won't you leave me a top before you go?"

"Rattlesnakes and thunderation!"

With a final effort Bill wriggled himself free. He tumbled over in the snow under the window, then picked himself up and ran wildly to where he heard the ill-suppressed laughter of his companions.

"What is it, child? What's the matter?" inquired Mrs. Naughton, as, lamp in hand, she appeared at the bedroom door.

"Oh, darn it!" said Tim, in dire disappointment, "it was Santa Claus, and he's got clean away. We'd have caught him if you'd only have come quick."

"The poor child is dhramin'," sighed Nance. "Come back to bed, agra, and I'll get the top for you meself in the mornin'."

"No, I ain't dreamin'," said Tim, and he ran to

where his stocking bulged with sweetness. "See, mammy, candy!"

Nance stood as if stunned. Her gaze rested on the little pile of money on the table. She took up and read the accompanying note:

" 'From old boys who are young tonight.' 'Tis from the boys, bless them!" she murmured. "And I was doubtin' them; I thought I was all alone. Well, from out of the shadows of the darkest night God sends the golden beams of dawn."

CHAPTER IX.

A SNOWBALL whizzed past the head of Jack Dacey and clogged the large, red ear of Bill Hinckley.

"Compliments of the season," cried the thrower of the missile. It was that impulsive and haughty damsel, Kate Carleton, social and musical rival of the departed Nell Naughton, and whose *rencontre* with the latter had been a painful opening incident of that eventful Christmas eve. She was one of a bevy of girls, mostly members of the choir, who were hastening to the church.

The snow was falling again, the beams from the lighted windows straggled through the whirling flakes.

"Good shot!" exclaimed Miss Kate. "There's a rousing Christmas salute for you."

"Blamed but I'll give you as rousin' a return for it," said the smitten one, stooping for ammunition; but the girls, laughing, fled into the church.

"Darn that chipper Carleton girl!" exclaimed Bill, scooping the snow out of his shocked and tingling auricle. "She's about bust my lug, and now I'll hardly be able to hear her singin'."

"Blessin' in disguise," said Dacey; "maybe in not hearin' her you won't be missin' much. But just cock your sound ear tonight, old pard, in the direction of my silvery voice, and I'll make you think you're listenin' to the angels."

"You might—the fallen ones," rejoined Bill. "What! Jack Dacey to sing in the choir! Here, boys, somebody soak me on the other ear!"

"Do, boys," heartily concurred Jack; "it will make no difference to him, so far as music is concerned, if both his ears are put out of business."

"Consarn ye, ye yelpin' coyote," retorted Bill, "it might be a darned good thing for the hull of us if yer silvery tongue was put out of business, too."

Two brawny hands reached simultaneously for pistols. But suddenly the friction arising from acute personalities vanished, and a look of gravity and awe came upon every face. Out on the midnight air floated a sound that previously "those valleys and rocks never heard." It was the bell in the squat tower of the church clanging forth its maiden peal and appeal, its initial solemn announcement and summons. It was by no means a costly bell, this recent addition to Father Malone's humble mining-camp oratory—just a small one of soft and gentle tone; but it seemed to all at once fill the air with benedictions, with a spirit of kindliness and love. To the listening group of rough mining men it brought up tender memories of happy days gone by ere the breaking of home ties; of cheerful hearths and joyous family circles and vanished faces. To some it spoke of quiet New England villages, to others of Tennessee mountain hamlets, to others of Irish glens. The sacred room in every manly heart was lighted, swept and garnished. Amid the powdering snowflakes the angel fairies of Christmastide were waving their magic wands, and even the indifferent as to revealed religion and the near-atheist and the professed atheist felt the potency of the spell.

The voice floating forth on the dark wintry night from that rude log campanile struck bosoms, whether callous or tender, as the wand of Moses struck the rock; there was a general stirring up, even unto their mystic depths, of the well-springs of human emotion. Everybody thought, and thought hard; nobody spoke, or had inclination of speaking—in presence of that potent and significant metallic one even the human voice divine would have sounded crude and raucous and sacrilegious. Shadowy forms emerged singly and in groups from the darkness and entered the church.

"Hark, a vibration swells!
Hark, 'tis the Christmas bells!
Hark to the heavenly voices down flowing!
Glory to God above,
Peace to the heart of love,
Woe is fled, strife is dead, in the white time of snowing!"

This from the chief sentimentalist of the camp, quoting from Dr. Sigerson, as the memory-evoking tintinnabulation ceased, and the jubilant youngster, who had piously and proudly acted as sexton, was rubbing his chafed hands on his trousers.

And then the rest of the tranced group found voice again.

"Jack, old pard," said Bill Hinckley huskily, "I think I sort of accidentally made a foolish remark kind of reflectin' on your singin', but of course you know I didn't mean it real serious."

"Of course you didn't, Bill," heartily coincided Jack Dacey, extending his hand, "and any ridiculous, disparagin' remarks of mine about your ear for music you must think about as never spoken."

"Hallo, boys; going to church, eh?" said the voice of Ebenezer Langford.

"Vell, vell, so ve're all goot beoples tonight," said that of Dave Levy.

The miners stared in surprise as they saw the pair enter the church, where they took seats near the entrance.

"Wonders will never cease," commented a miner; "one might as well expect to see here Old Nick and his prime minister."

"Heaven help the church if Levy gets religion," said another; "he'll start a bar on one side of the door and a loan-shark shop on the other."

"Boys, keep an eye on the collection box," laughed another.

From within was heard the swelling peal of the organ. Jack Dacey sighed. "There'll be a sweet voice missing in the choir tonight," he thought, "and we'll be a bit at sea without Frenchy to direct us. God be with poor Nell, wherever she is. Come, boys, it's time for us to be on hand."

"I feel a bit shivery," faltered Bill, "but I'm game. I suppose the proper caper is to duck our lids when we get on the inside. You're on to this racket, Jack; you go ahead and face the music, so we'll know how to act and not make a break."

"Come on, and I'll show you," said Dacey, and with the diffidence of timid maidens at their first high social function, the brawny miners filed into the church.

The interior, illumined with oil lamps, was decorated for the Christmas festival, and the result, if primitive, was tenderly suggestive and quaintly picturesque. "Gloria in excelsis Deo," commemorative of the origi-

nal Christmas night, was lettered with other mottoes appropriate to the season on the roughly plastered walls. Garlands of evergreens were festooned from the rough-hewn logs of the roof. They enwreathed the altar and the pictured stations of the cross. At the foot of the altar stood the vestmented priest in surplice and cassock, between his two acolytes, and the pews were filled with silent and devout worshipers of various religious beliefs—many outsiders having for the time being strayed back into the precincts of the ancient fold—their heads bowed and their hearts uplifted under the inspiration of the kindly Christmas spirit whose essence is the unity of nature and religion, the warming and sanctification of human hearts, the bringing of man closer to man and to God.

"Adeste fideles, læti triumphantes;
Venite, venite in Bethlehem."

As the strains of the familiar Christmas hymn floated through the church some faces were momentarily turned and inquiring looks shot toward the choir. The rippling soprano of Kate Carleton was there, and the sweet tones of Maud Bronson, daughter of the English financier of the Old Thunder mine, and the reverberant bass of Jack Dacey, and other voices, male and female, most of them well known in the mining camp and clearly distinguishable in the chorus. What the regular congregation missed, with a sudden sense of disappointment and vacuity that detracted from the spirit of the occasion, was the splendid, ear-commanding, emotion-compelling voice of Nell Naughton. Where was the daughter of Nance, they wondered, knowing not that the nightingale

of the camp had at length fluttered discontentedly from her irksome environments, and was even then far away on her journey to San Francisco in company with a certain vivacious and volatile gentleman with operatic ambitions, and coal-black hair, pointed mustache and imperial.

In a pew near the door sat the mine overseer and the saloonkeeper, looking with less of veneration than of curiosity at the beginning of the celebration of Mass and wondering at the scope or signification of it all. At times they glanced furtively around, especially towards the door, to see if the outward passage lay clear. At length, as Father Malone was reading the epistle, Langford nudged his companion.

"Let us slip out now," he said; "we have no time to lose. They will not notice our going or coming."

And so, with evil purpose seething in their hearts in that holy hour and season, they cautiously arose and stole forth from the house of God, relieving it from the desecration of their presence.

At the very threshold, as they were putting on their hats and chuckling over the cleverness of their secret exit, they came face to face with a woman leading by the hand a little boy—a tall and robust woman with a plaid woolen shawl over her head. It was the Widow Naughton with her son Tim. The sudden apparition of the intended victim of their plot caused them to involuntarily start and recoil. Flashing on them a look of surprise not unmixed with scorn, she passed on and entered the church.

"Confound that woman!" growled Langford; "she above all others to spot us coming out! Well, it can't be

IT WAS THE WIDOW NAUGHTON WITH HER SON TIM.

helped now. But no matter; let's hurry up with our little business and we'll be back in time to ward off suspicion."

A little later, by means of the key which Langford had procured, the pair stealthily entered the shaft house of the Old Thunder mine, the overseer again carrying the heavy black satchel.

In their intensity of purpose they suspected not that on their track, shadowing them as he had often shadowed them before, intent and vigilant, was a tenacious Nemesis—a celestial one. Ching stalked his favorite game from the church to the shaft house. When they entered it he even daringly glided in after them and intently watched from a recess their proceedings. He saw them light a candle, after which Langford opened his satchel and took therefrom a heavy, globular sphere, like a cannon ball, the sight of which caused the Jew, now pale and trembling, a tremendous effort to control his impulse to run away.

"Mein Gott, dake care, Langford, dake care!" he whispered. "Be quick and let us get out of here. Be cautious how you handle dot blasted ting."

"This blasted thing will be blasted mighty soon, and so will the mine," said Ebenezer coolly, "but not until we so please. The fuse is long enough to give us plenty of time to get out of danger and back among those pious folks in church, where we won't run short for an alibi. Here's the best place for the bomb to do its most effective work; in ten minutes this shaft will be a much closed incident indeed. And now a very urgent and vital reason calls us hence—let's vamoose."

The pair left the shaft house as stealthily as they had

entered, passing within a yard of where crouched the watchful Chinaman. The latter, after listening to their departing feet, struck a light and cautiously approached the instrument of destruction. His oriental mind took quick grasp of the situation. Here were these two plotters at work again—the same brand of hellish work that had crushed and mangled to death his employer, Tom Naughton—at it again, meaning misfortune and ruin for the widow and for little Tim. A very bad thing for the mine, he thought, if that dangerous looking thing should blow up where the plotters wanted it to; better, if it had to, that it should go off elsewhere.

Acting almost as quick as he thought, he picked up the bomb, carried it for a considerable distance, and dropped it down an old, abandoned shaft. It was a silly act, to be sure, for which he would have paid immediately with his life but that the bomb fell on a heap of soft clay, and the concussion was not severe enough to cause an explosion. But in his haste, Ching had made a very grave mistake. He had overlooked the fuse. He might have easily extinguished it had he thought of it or seen it. And now that he gazed into the black pit, where it was beyond his reach, he saw the red glow of the lighted end, menacing as the eye of a deadly serpent.

Ching ran for the shaft house. He made for the door and tried to open it. In vain; Langford had locked it on leaving. The Chinaman, alone and his whereabouts and situation unknown and unsuspected, was imprisoned with a terrible death!

With a yell he tore frantically at the wooden walls of the shaft house. He picked up a large rock and battered with it here and there, meanwhile shouting for help in

most incoherent pidgin English. At last, to his joy ineffable, a board yielded and loosened to his blows. Through the fissure made he slipped panting into the outer air and snow. He dashed away from that place of fear and dread as fast as his short celestial legs could carry him.

In the little church of the mining camp all heads were bowed in humble reverence of the Great Mystery, the wholesome instinctive adoration of the benignant all-seeing, all-providing Power, ever ancient and ever new, before which the agnostic scientist falters, bewildered, and the savage, with the semi-brute instinct of his creation upon him, grovels and appeals in the darkness, groping for the hand of his Maker. The Mass had glided from the epistle, there was the usual shuffling of feet when the congregation arose at the gospel and stood and bowed at the Credo, and again came the kneeling and supplication, as knelt and supplicated the rude and simple shepherds on the plains of Palestine so long, long ago. The priest bowed his head on the snow-white altar. Presently thrilled through the church the three soft, solemn, silvery strokes of the altar bell announcing the near advent of the Redeemer, and again burst forth the volumed music of the choir:

"Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis."

It was then came the shock of a terrific explosion. The church shook. The hanging oil lamps vibrated and swung. Decorative wreaths dropped from the stations of the cross. Women screamed. The choir stopped sing-

ing. There was a scuffling and stamping of feet as the congregation, by a general impulse, arose. Some members commenced a stampede down the aisle.

"What is it, mammy?" asked Tim Naughton, clasping his mother by the hand.

"It sounds like the end of the world," replied Nance.

The miners looked at one another in inquiry.

"That's no regular blast," remarked Bill Hinckley; "besides, the mine ain't workin' tonight."

Father Malone addressed the excited crowd: "Remember you are in the church," he said. "Whatever that sound may mean kneel down and ask the help of God."

The church door was flung open and a creature scared and crying out in terror rushed up the aisle and crouched panting at the altar rail. Pursuing him came a vengeful mob headed by Langford, Levy and Bronson. The last named seemed bordering on insanity.

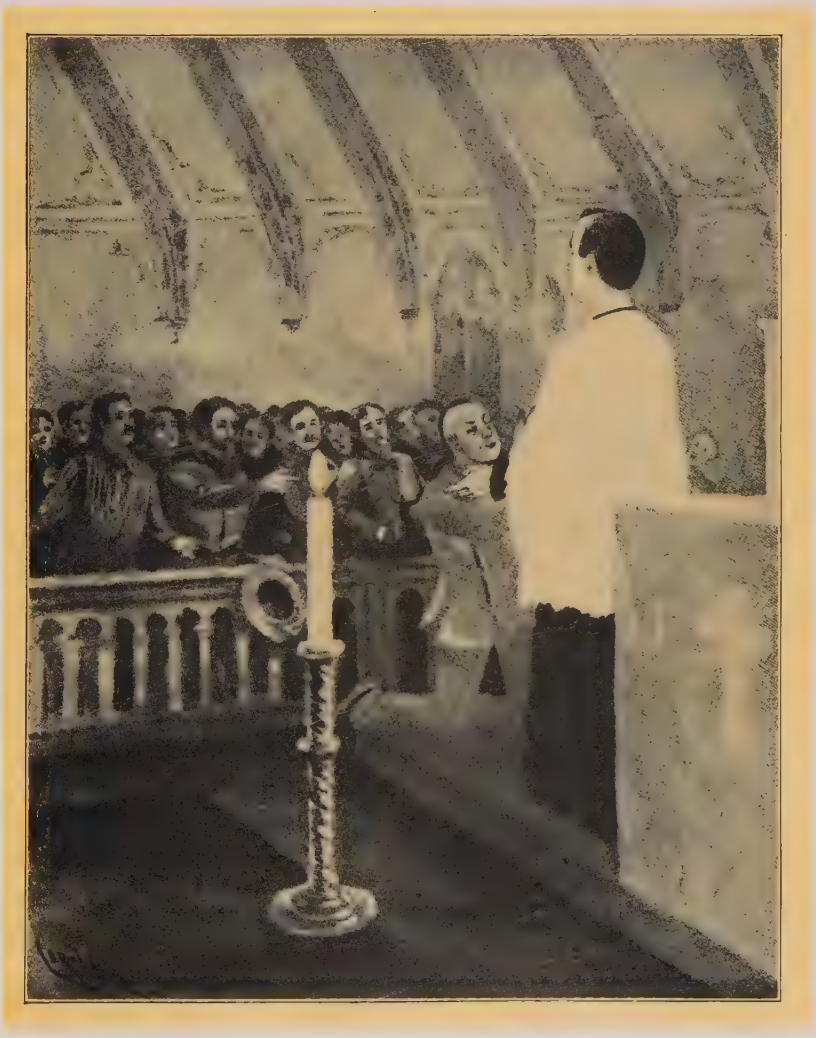
"I am ruined! I am ruined!" he cried; "the mine is blown up!"

"And the yellow devil did it," shouted Langford.

"String him up, string him up, the scoundrel!" yelled the Englishman, his countenance, framed in his gray hair and whiskers, inflamed and distorted with excitement; and many there were who helped to swell into a menacing roar his demand for vengeance.

"Come on, boys, get a rope and do the job," said Langford, and he laid his hand on the shoulder of the shrinking Ching, the pursued one, who cried out anew in terror.

The priest quickly descended the altar, seized the



"STAND BACK! NO VIOLENCE IN THE HOUSE OF GOD."

trembling Chinaman by the shoulder, drew him inside the altar rail and closed the small gate.

"Stand back," he said, "cease this desecration. No violence in the house of God."

"Save us your crazy ideas," insolently retorted Langford. "The yellow viper has blown up the mine. He must hang, and hang at once."

And he made an effort as if he would cross the rail and seize the Chinaman even within the sanctuary. But a push from a vigorous arm sent him reeling backward amongst the crowd and Nance Naughton confronted him with accusing finger and blazing eyes.

"You lie, Langford," she said. "Why should the Chinaman blow up the mine? What interest would that poor yellow boy have in destroying my property? Ah, robber of the widow and the orphan, if the mine is ruined you know well the hand that did it!"

In vain he sought to brave her gaze. He winced disconcerted, as he realized that he was the cynosure of many inquiring and suspicious eyes.

"I—I defy you to prove that," he blurted, then turned and walked out of the church.

By degrees order was restored, the celebration of the holy sacrifice was resumed, the congregation knelt in prayer, and the pure and sanctified feast of Christmas, of late so rudely disturbed, reasserted itself in the humble mountain oratory.

CHAPTER X.

AFTER THE EXPLOSION.

THE Old Thunder mine was not closed. It had received a considerable jar, but it was still in tolerable working order. "The best laid schemes of mice and men"—from a discreet distance Messrs. Langford and Levy, reconnoitering, realized with sickly feeling and sense of dread the force of the Scot's terse epigram. They heard the whistle sound. They saw the men assembling for work. The gloomy conviction grew and hardened upon them that they were as the most abject pair of villainous plotters, "foiled" and "baffled," whose miserable lot it was to slouch dejectedly yet revengefully, amid the hisses of the virtuous exulting audience, across the stage in melodrama.

"David Levy, my whisky-selling, money-lending, mine-exploiting coadjutor," said Langford, "it seems to me that we're having a pretty bad run of hard luck. How would you account for this? The mine is as open as ever. There's not even a chip off the shaft house. And yet it seems to me that the bomb that we planted was big and strong enough to have blown up Gibraltar."

"Dot ve planted?" The saloonkeeper assumed a tone of resentment and repudiation. "I vish you vouldn't say such silly things. I didn't plant no bomb. Just please remember dot; if effer de boys get wise and come round huntin' us mit a rope, see, I didn't plant no bomb."

Langford laughed heartily; for the time being he had played and lost, and he took his defeat and peril with the philosophy of a gambler and the fortitude of a reckless criminal. He had a certain sense of humor, and his most favorite source of piquant amusement was the combined cunning, avarice and timidity of this little beady-eyed, beak-nosed man whom he had tactfully lured into devious excursions aloof from the straight white path.

"Getting scary again, Dave?" he said. "Trying to play the baby act? Keep up your courage, pal, and remember that your life depends on your loyalty. If the boys get up a lynching-bee there won't be but two of us in it. Therefore, my over-nervous friend, as good old Ben Franklin said, if we don't hang together we'll surely hang separate. And also bear in mind, my captivating Narcissus, of the risk I have run in the matter and that the making of our fortunes depended on the bomb."

"On de bomb," sarcastically echoed Levy. "Vell, yes, Mishter Langford; but your bomb vas on de bum. See here, mine friendt," he said with savage energy, "you've peen goin' about dis business in de wrong vay. Twice you tried to close up dot shaft and twice you failed. I don't like your style of doin' business, and I don't vant any more of your bombs around mine place. De plain, open, simple vay is de best. Vat I say is, get up dot strike."

"Get it up if you can, Levy," said Langford; "get the fellows aroused, excited, enthused, discontented. Maybe you can, my son, but not today; there's a keen wit working against us and she's got them corralled for the present. Levy, I'm disappointed, disgusted, tired. Our

mine is about panned out; I feel like throwing up the job and going back east."

"Nonsense," protested the other; "come over to de saloon and let's talk de whole ting over."

"Rotten with gold! Rotten with gold!" artfully muttered Langford, re-arousing and tantalizing his companion's cupidity, as they strolled through the snow to the Miners' Exchange, while the sunbeams broke through a gray bank of cloud and lighted up the white peaks of the Thunder mountains.

At the entrance to the Naughton mine a crowd of men had assembled, and there most of them stayed, fearful to descend.

"The mine is hoodooed," was the generally expressed opinion. There was a contagion of superstition. Big bearded fellows gazed down as if into the mouth of hades and turned towards each other in surprise at the temerity of those who ventured to descend.

Yet the mine was still in working order. The observing determination of Messrs. Langford and Levy to put it temporarily out of business with the view of getting control of it had been again baffled and set at naught, and all by the vigilance of a little Chinaman who came near paying for his interference with his life, and that by the agency of bomb or rope, of being either blown up or hung up.

It had, however, suffered a bad shaking up, making it a dangerous place to explore and necessitating much judicious propping. Large fissures had opened here and there. Huge masses of rock had fallen, ledges were loosened and threatening to fall, showing the enormous

force of the explosion. A yawning pit showed the havoc wrought by the bomb in the abandoned diggings.

"There ain't a safe foot of ground round the old hole," remarked Bill Hinckley, as from a safe distance he gazed towards the black abyss; " 'twill be well for none of us to go nigh to it."

"A h—ll of a country," he commented, "where a man cannot leave his property one night without a guard. Boys, it's a beastly shame. We've got to put a stop to this kind of thing."

"The way to stop it," said a grizzled miner, "is to ketch and hang the feller that did it. Now, that Chinaman—"

"That Chinaman is all right," interjected Bill, "and I believe his story as far as he tells it—and badly the yellow heathen can tell it, he being poor at the English. Any fool can see that the blast went off in the old diggins, where he threw the bomb or infernal machine or whatever it was, else we wouldn't be able to get here today. The thing was put in the main shaft so the explosion would ruin and close it up; he found it there and threw it in the old diggin's so's to save the mine; his story is as plain as daylight."

"But why didn't the Chink carry it out of the mine altogether?" asked a miner.

"Why didn't he, indeed?" grunted Bill in scathing contempt. "Why didn't he carry himself out in Chinese mincemeat? Better go and soak your head. It would take some nerve, I think, to carry a lighted bomb out of that shaft, even if one could live long enough to do it."

There were noddings of approval, expressions of vague and eager curiosity as to the perpetrator of the

outrage, with a general vehement expression of desire to wreak upon him vengeance prompt and dire.

A gleaming of lanterns shone through the tunnel, as the Widow Naughton, accompanied by Robert Bronson and several miners, came threading her way through the heaps of debris.

"Boys," she said, "there's no use now in talkin' about whoever tried to blow us up and threatenin' to hang him and all that. Maybe we'll ketch him later and attend to him, but we haven't time for it now. Besides, such amusement doesn't suit Christmas day. Sorry I am to have ye work the blessed day that's in it, but sure it can't be helped. What we need now is work—quick, hard work—to save the mine. The whole place is shakin' and the loosened rocks are ready to fall at any minute and choke up the drift. The regular shift is up above, but the men are afeard to come down. The fools say the place is cursed; that there's a hoodoo on it."

Jack Dacey laughed. "Plucky kind of miners they!"

"The only hoodoo on Old Thunder, boys," continued Nance, "is the fellow who's been long tryin' hard to ruin and rob me. The only curse on it is the curse of the villain who's been long plottin' to cheat me out of my own."

"Who is he?" demanded several miners, with vigorous expression of desire to wreak summary vengeance.

"Whisht, boys," she replied, "you'll know that later on. What I want you to do is to stick by me and help me to get the better of the divil who's workin' night and day to beat me out of me property."

The men crowded around her with earnest declarations of loyalty.

"Thank ye, boys, I believe your words and I see truth and honesty in your faces. Well, the first thing is to clear up and make secure; everything is so loosened and dangerous. There's not a safe foot of rock around the old shaft."

And she proceeded to deliver her orders and direct her forces with all the skill and directness of a mining queen of industry.

"Jack, you take your men and look after the north drift. You, Buck, go with your crew and get busy in the south tunnel. You, Bill, take the drill and look to the new drift; go at the loose rock and clear away the working."

"Nance, you're a wonder," exclaimed Robert Bronson admiringly. "Nothing seems to daunt you. You'd make a famous general. You have nerves of steel. Do you ever feel like other women?"

The widow laughed and shook her head.

"Feel like other women, is it? Why the dickens wouldn't I? Does it make me less a woman because I have the knack of bossin' a lot of men? Many's the time, Mr. Bronson, that I've stood and faced a growlin' gang of them when me heart was flutterin' like a bird and pretended to laugh and joke with them, humorin' them as best I could, when the heart within me was sick with fear. I'm only a woman who puts her trust in God, but, och, it's a hard thing to be a mother and a mine boss at the same time. See here."

Going to a nook she raised a shawl and disclosed the sleeping form of little Tim.

"Not a soul but meself this blessed day to look after him, so I had to bring him with me into the bowels of the

earth. Here's what gives me courage in the hour of need."

"Any mutterings about a strike?" inquired Bronson.

"Not a whisper that I've heard of," she replied. "The men are all right."

But the Englishman expressed uneasiness. "I have learned that our friend Levy has joined the union and even gotten himself elected agent or walking delegate. It means more trade to his saloon, more trouble to us. Besides, it's pretty hard to trust these fellows around us. They will be simply uncontrollable when they find we're at their mercy."

"Och, man, don't say so. They're a rough lot, but we can depend on them. Look at them workin' like beavers, gettin' the place back into shape. Let Dave Levy get up all the strikes he wants in his whisky shop, but he'll get up no strike in this mine; not today, anyhow. The men have agreed to stick, and we're gettin' up a fine Christmas lunch for them. Tim, Tim, you little villain," she cried to her small offspring, who, awakened from his sleep, had started on a round of exploration, "come back here this minute and keep away from that hole."

"It's certainly an ugly looking pit," remarked Bronson, looking at the scene of the explosion. "We are lucky that the mine was not completely ruined." And he moved towards the shaft.

"Giddap, you rambunctious animal," cried a testy voice, "and don't be playin' de debbil like everything else around here. Golly, I'se goin' to get out of here, for dere's a hoodoo sure on dis old mine."

It was Joe, the colored boy, leading a mule drawing

a small cart. He was unaware of the presence of the widow until there happened a sudden mighty shock to his constitution.

"There's for your hoodoo, Joe. Talk your foolishness to your brother as much as you please, but to nobody else."

"Gracious, missus, was it you done that?" he asked, vigorously rubbing the smitten part.

"Yes," said Nance, "and if I ketch you makin' hoodoo talk again I'll knock your kinky head off."

"Golly!" said the surprised Joe, "I thought it was the mule kicked me."

CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN OLD THUNDER.

THE clang of a bell sounded through the mine. To the workers it was a familiar voice, yet somehow condensed and reverberating in the rocky tunnels, it seemed strange, especially on Christmas day.

"Evelybody eat," announced Ching, himself surprised at the hollow sound of his bell and voice and the novelty of the dining place, deep underground.

With some surprise and murmurs of discontent the workers abandoned their tools and tasks and drew towards the spot selected for the subterranean picnic.

"Curious place for a Christmas meal," commented one.

"Worse than in a penitentiary," growled another. The idea of holiday festivity amid such sordid and work-aday surroundings was not a popular one. The men, however, slowly rallied, some of them sullenly enough, to the rattle of knives, forks and dishes, to where several baskets laden with food and drink lay on the rocky floor and Mrs. Nance Naughton herself, arrayed in a large white apron and with her arms bare to the elbow, presided over the feast.

Some of the men sat them down upon rocks and piles of debris, others squatted and sprawled upon the floor,

others leaned against the rough fissured sides of the excavation. With the light flickering on their rugged faces and dimly showing their stony and gloomy surroundings, they looked by turns like bandits in some cave rendezvous in Calabria or a parliament of gnomes assembled deep in the bowels of the earth.

The widow was quick to notice an atmosphere of discontent and that with a sense of alarm and self-reproach. It was hard and cruel, she thought, to keep the men from the well-earned enjoyment of the greatest festival of the year; but it was either this or the serious injury, perhaps ruin, of the mine, or worse, maybe, a strike. Her natural tact came to her aid.

"Boys," she said, "it's well I know the great favor you're doin' me this day of all days in the year in stayin' by me to help save the mine and sacrificin' your own innocent pleasures——"

"Innocent pleasures, indeed!" whispered Jack Hayes to Bill Hinckley; "fillin' their skins with red eye and maybe shootin' holes in each others' lungs."

"Sacrificin' your own innocent, gentle, simple pleasures," continued Nance, sharpening the carving knife on the steel as she spoke, as if she were putting an edge on her eloquence. "Ah, I will never forget your great kindness to me this day—never! I know when I see honest faces and thrue hearts around me, and I see with pride and joy that there's no need whatever to put willin'ness and good nature into your sowls, to fill ye with the sperrit of—of——"

"Levy's best fusel," prompted big Bill.

"No, Bill, yer wrong—it's plain to see that, like

meself, yer a better miner than an orator, betther with the dhrill than with the tongue. What I mane to say is that I'd like to fill them with——"

"With first-class grub, Nance—and, by crickey, yer goin' to do it!" he added, as the baskets being opened, a savory odor floated to the rocky roof.

"Bad manners to you! interruptin' a lady in her maiden banquet speech," exclaimed the widow. "Here, Bill, if you think yer as handy with the carvin' as with the talkin', you'd better lend a hand, for the boys are hungry and the stuff is coolin'." She tossed to him a carving knife and fork, which he proceeded to use with vim, and the subterranean meal was begun.

It was a merry meal, too, if unembellished and rude, suggestive of the feasts of our primitive ancestors in their mountain caves. There was meat in grand plenty and variety—beef and mutton, chicken and turkey, even mountain deer and mountain sheep — with numerous healthy appetites to do it justice. There were no gloomy or discontented faces now—nothing but general festivity. The great animal man was being fed into the best of humor. High spirits prevailed and the cavity in the Old Thunder was filled with a chaos of sounds of good cheer, jokes, banter and laughter, with an accompanying clatter of tableware.

"Not so bad, after all, boys," commented one of the late murmurers; "the Miners' Exchange ain't a patch on this."

"You bet it ain't," agreed one who sat next him, whose bristly jaws were busy with a juicy drumstick; "you don't find old Levy puttin' up no turkey dinner."

"Not if he knows it, Buck, you don't," coincided big Bill, recalling his poultry raid of the previous night.

"Nance does things like a queen, don't she?" said a miner.

"Well, yes, if you mean the Queen of Holland," answered Jack Dacey, famed for his newspaper lore; "little Wilhelmina leads all the field of crowned heads in coaxin' her husband to get outside of a meal. But still Nance might give even her Dutch majesty a few pointers on winnin' men's hearts through their stomachs."

But the Widow Naughton herself, as roast fowl after fowl came to view, with crisp joints, legs of lamb, and large, brown, fruit-speckled Christmas loaves, was about the most surprised person at the board. It seemed to her a miracle of the season. She quietly beckoned to the Chinaman, who, with alert and ever-smiling agility, was waiting on the guests.

"Ching, you rascal, where did you get all this grub?"

Broader than ever was the smile that lit the Celestial's face as he replied mysteriously:

"Evelybody send Clistmas."

Which gave added stimulus to the widow's robust faith in human nature and made her feel as complacent as a beloved princess on an unshaking and unshakable throne, surrounded by faithful and devoted subjects. In the fullness of her gratitude, in that strange underground abode of kindliness and good cheer, came to her one depressing reflection: How was it faring with her daughter Nell? Was Providence watching over the flitted and missing one with the same wondrous kindness as over herself?

"Mammy, mammy, more of the Christmas cake," pleaded little Tim, who sat cuddled beside her, and a feeling of consolation and confidence came to her as she fondly passed her hands through his brown curls. She found herself listening with special interest and sympathy to a sentimental ditty which was being trolled by Jack Dacey, whose eyes were raised to the rocky roof as if it were in danger of falling upon him:

"Life is a harp by angels made
But oft by the hand of the devil played;
And so, in the beautiful hymn of life,
Ring notes of joy and tones of strife;
And its harmony rich blends the treble of glee
With the deep, sad bass of misery.

"Then take life as it comes, whate'er it be,
Sunshine or shadow, sorrow or glee,
For, whatever the future may seem to be,
God will bring sunshine from shadow."

"Bravo, Jack!" she cried, smiling and clapping her hands. "Good voice and good sentiment. We've had our shadows and our showers, and now it's about time the sunshine was comin' our way."

As she arose from her seat, making excuses to the merry crew, and proceeded with ever restless energy to make a brief round of inspection, she met her financial backer, Mr. Robert Bronson, who expressed himself well pleased with the condition of affairs.

"Things are not half as bad as I thought," he said cheerily. "Nance, you are a wonder. The men have worked like heroes, thanks to your encouragement, to get the place back into shape, and I see you've got them all as merry as crickets. No chance of a strike now, and a fig for our enemies. But oh, that vein!"

"Patience and work will get it, Mr. Bronson," she said emphatically. "Have no fear. My poor husband said it was there, and there it is."

"I wonder, fellers," conjectured Bill Hinckley, as he proceeded to replenish with a foaming amber fluid from a tin can sundry cannikins and goblets, "what kind of a Christmas they're having up at the Miners' Exchange."

"Large dollars to small doughnuts, nothing within twenty miles of what we're having down here," responded Jack Dacey. "For blowin' up mines, and interruptin' of church service, and workin' and proppin' and eatin' and drinkin', faith, it's the strangest, quarest, liveliest, jolliest Christmas I've ever seen in my life, even if we are spendin' it away down in a mine. Boys, here's a health to the old folks at home; 'tis they will be maybe thinkin' of us and missin' us today."

"Maybe they will," said a chin-whiskered cynic, "but there's one will be sure to be missin' us, and that's old Levy."

"I'm afraid he'll miss something else, too," said big Bill, and he was proceeding with the frankness of a Claude Duval to relate a certain shady transaction concerning a turkey, when in the nick of time he heard a familiar grating voice behind him, and he turned with a tremendous start and an expression of amazement.

"Thunderation! speak of the evil one!"

"Missin' you, poys, I heard you say. Of course I vas; vy vouldn't I, mine goot friendts and customers? I vas vonderin' vat became of you all, so I yust ventured down de shaft to pid you a merry Christmas, vat I sees you're havin,', ha, ha!"

Several miners rose to their feet with looks and lurid expressions of amazement.

The newcomer, who stood before them, briskly rubbing his hands and smiling what was intended to be a bland, winning, even fatherly smile, was the saloonkeeper of the Miners' Exchange, Mr. David Levy, silk hat, silkier manner, and all.

CHAPTER XII.

A DEATH AND A DISCOVERY.

SO you've been havin' a goot time, poys," said the saloonkeeper, as he stood confronting the group of miners, his keen eyes quickly taking in the details of the scene. It looked like the close of a feast of the cavemen, the stony floor strewn with bones of beast and fowl, which Ching was nimbly picking up and throwing in baskets for removal.

"The bulliest time ever," responded Jack Dacey. "But you're late. The greatest western social function of the year is over. Our dinin' hall may be low in the world, but the grub was of the highest order."

"Certainly de schmell tells of some good eatin's," remarked Levy.

"Best delicacies of the season," said Jack, "and all of them in most huge and amazin' variety, everything from diamond-backed terrapin and corned beef and cabbage to soft-shell gazabos shot by Teddy in the jungles of Peekaboo and sent with his compliments for this grand occasion, just as old Pierpont sent the Pommery Sec—best I ever tasted."

The roar of laughter that followed seemed to arouse the suspicions of the visitor—that together with the odor that lingered.

"I vonder," he said, "vas it one of you dot shtole mine turkey."

Big Bill emitted a fierce yell of injured innocence. "What, you double darned, sickle nosed booze slinger! Don't you dare to insinivate that anybody here had such doggoned bad taste and judgment as to make free with any over-aged, under-fed, indiarubber turkey of yours that even a mountain lion wouldn't be able to get his teeth through? G'long with you!"

"If it's turkeys you're lookin' for here, Mr. Levy," said Dacey, "you'd best peek in the basket that Ching is carryin'."

"Aha, maybe 'tvas he dot shtole him," said Levy.

"Ching, me poor wicked heathen child of sin," drawled Jack, "you're put down for everything from blowin' up mines to swipin' turkeys out of poor Israelites' saloons."

"Velly bad man," remarked the little Chinaman, his almond eyes fixed piercingly upon Levy, who averted his gaze and scanned the walls and roof.

"Vell, vell, I am werry glad to see dot not much harm vas done by dot big blast last night. I'll bet you some of de vorkin' mans vill be plamed for dot business."

"How much will you bet, Mr. Levy?" asked Jack. "I'll take you up; this time of year I could use a little easy money."

"Maybe you'd lose," answered the proprietor of the Miners' Exchange. "Didn't you hear vot de vidder said last night—dot somebody vas behint de Chinaman in dot blowin' up affair?"

"Well," replied the other, "she didn't say that the somebody was a workin' man."

"Aha, but dot's vhat vill be said later on," persisted the Jew, animated to sudden eloquence by the veiled motive of his visit. "Of course it vill be de vorkin' man blamed for it. Don't dey always lay de blame on de vorkin' man? Pay him half de vages he earns, treat him like a tog, and kick him like a tog ven anyting goes wrong. Dot's vot he gets, and dot's vot he deserves to get as long as he puts up mit it."

There was a murmur of interest and approval.

"Darned if they're ain't more truth than poetry in that," growled a gaunt miner with a tuft on his chin.

"Bravo, Levy!" cried another. "You're a silver-tongued orator. Go ahead and pitch into the bloated capitalists."

"Ah, mine poys, dot's all right, but it's not talk dot does de business; it's vork, it's action," continued the Jew, warming to his subject. "Vasn't I down to de meeting of de union de other night and didn't I hear de vorkmans tell of de great and shameful and disgustin' wrongs dot vas tone dem? And I tell you I made up mine mind bretty quick to be a friendt of de vorkman. And because I am his friendt, his true friendt, as eferypody knows, dey elected me to represent de union, and because I am a friendt of de vorkin' mans I say ve must demand more pay and less vork."

There was a round of applause, not unaccompanied by ironical laughter. Levy had not taken an opportune time for a crusade against capital, especially against capital as humbly represented by the Widow Naughton and her financial backers. Men with healthy appetites well and recently satisfied were not prone to respond to the call of discontent. But Levy, full of sanguine enthusiasm in

his sinister mission, overlooked this phase of the situation.

"Strike!" he vociferated. "Dot is de weapon of de vorkin' mans. Strike, and vhen dey vant vork done dey must bay a fair price for it. Strike, all of us?"

He was pounding his fist into his palm, emphatically driving home his appeal, when a vigorous grip seized him by the collar and whirled him around. His face grew pale and he looked a rather fearful and embarrassed individual indeed as he found himself confronting Nance Naughton.

"Strike, do you say, Levy?" said the widow, her eyes blazing and her hands clenched. "Well, for two pins I'd take you at your word."

"De devil!" he ejaculated, shrinking back and looking nervously about him.

"No," she said, "not your father, but a woman who can deal with the likes of you."

"Vy," he faltered, "I am doin' no harm; I vas only talkin' mit de vorkmans."

"You were, were you? And by what right do you come down here and talk strike to my men?"

"I was just talkin' in general," he said deprecatingly. "Dere vas nothin' bad in vot I said, Mrs. Naughton."

She eyed him with withering contempt. The miners, grouped around, listened with interest to the colloquy, many of them impressed and amused at the suddenly altered bearing and visible apprehension of the saloonkeeper.

"Better tell the truth," she said scornfully. "You're here to make trouble, and be the powers above if you do I'll shoot you like a rat. I know all about you and your

pal Langford. Nice pair ye to go to the union and humbug them into electin' ye to represent the workin' men!"

"Vell, dey did elect us, Mrs. Naughton," he said, with assumption of defiance, "and you'd petter not make any trouble mit me. I am de valkin' delegate."

"Well," retorted she, "you'll be the runnin' delegate if you ain't out the shaft in five minutes. Who are you, to represent the workin' man? What work do you do beyond poisonin' men with your bad whisky and lendin' money at ten per cent interest a month? What are you but the tool of Langford, who has been long plottin' with yourself to get possesion of this mine, even if to do it ye had to close it up and ruin me?"

It was a bad time for Dave Levy. Suspicious looks and angry glances were turned on him, and his position became very unpleasant when, like a pursuing Nemesis, the little Chinaman appeared and pointed at him an accusing finger:

"Velly bad man."

"Ha, ha," sarcastically cried Nance, "well may you shiver in your shoes, Dave Levy, for here's the chap can tell of the doin's of yourself and Langford. You thought he couldn't speak, but he can make himself understood."

The miners exchanged looks and murmurs of inquiry.

"Why, what d'ye mean, Nance?" asked Bill Hinckley.

"Tell us straight out if they've been doin' you dirt," said Jack Dacey.

"Dirt and divilment, boys," she replied, turning to them. "I've stood shoulder to shoulder and hand in hand with ye, ay, and done the work of a man, and none of ye ever yet saw me weaken or whimper, and I never asked any favors for meself or me family."

"That's right," they concurred, gathering around her.

"Nary a favor ever," said big Bill.

"I bear no malice and I think I'm a purty forgivin' sort of person," she continued, "but I think it's about time to open my mouth and tell the truth, particularly when one of the villains whose been long tryin' to ruin me has the impudence to come right in among us to carry on his dirty work. Well, it was no Chinaman that tried to blow up the mill last night. There's one of the men that did it."

"It's a lie, it's a lie, she's crazy," cried Levy, recoiling from those menacing husky forms and frowning faces.

"Ay, and more than that," she said, "the hand that placed the bomb in the mine was the hand that murdered my husband."

"It's a lie, it's a lie!" asseverated the affrighted object of denunciation, backing away and glancing wildly round for a chance to escape.

"Lynch law or regular law—he's a good subject for any of them," said Bill, and there was a rush for the Jew, who turned and ran. On making his way towards the shaft he was seized by Nance, but he managed to tear himself loose. Snatching a shovel from the floor he hurled it into the faces of the angry men, who momentarily recoiled. Then, catching up little Tim Naughton, he rushed towards where the yawning chasm made by the explosion of the bomb marked the site of the old, abandoned workings. On the verge of the black pit he halted, fierce and snarling as a wild beast, and raised the child in his arms.

"Now touch me if you tare," he yelled, desperate

TRAGIC FALL AND DEATH OF DAVE LEVY.

with terror; "come a step nearer and it'll be life for life—I'll throw de kid into de hole."

"Mammy, mammy!" cried Tim, and his mother, seeing the danger, uttered a cry of alarm, for the surface at the edge of the chasm was fissured and loosened.

"My God! Take care, Levy, the rocks under your feet are rotten. Come back!"

"Let me away from here, den," fiercely bargained the man at bay; "it's my life or his!"

"Shoot the dog! kill him!" cried some of the men. Levy glared defiance at them and menacingly swung the child over his head.

There was a sudden shout of alarm from the crowd, a scream from Nance, a hollow rumble of falling rocks. Dave Levy, ghastly with a new terror, dropped Tim and flung his hands in the air, grasping with swift fingers at nothing. Then both he and the child disappeared as if Mother Earth, in horrid eagerness to reclaim her own, had opened and swallowed them.

Frantic with grief and horror Nance Naughton made a rush for the engulfing chasm, and the life of that vigorous western heroine and of this veracious narrative would have had here a most inopportune and unsatisfactory ending save for the prompt interference of her trusty William of Deloraine, to-wit: big Bill Hinckley, who restrained her from plunging into eternity, he having, as he afterward confessed, one of the hardest jobs in his life to accomplish the same, struggling for some crucial moments with one hundred and seventy pounds of frenzied and muscular femininity.

"Let me go, Bill; let me go, I tell you!" she cried. "My child is killed!"

"Have sense, woman," said Hinckley, retaining a firm grasp upon her the while; "you can't do no good for him by killing yourself."

The men, appalled at the swift tragedy, the seeming dual sacrifice of the wicked and the innocent, stood aloof. None dared approach the treacherous margin of the black pit in whose depths the man and the child were now probably lying under tons of rock, the pit into which a single movement, a footstep on a loose stone, might cause another thundering avalanche of rock, bearing the cause of it down to death.

"Have courage, Nance, they may be living yet, and we'll soon find out whether they are or not," said Jack Dacey.

A lithe and active volunteer stepped forward. "Me go down," said Ching.

"Hold hard, my little yellow hero," said Jack, assuming the generalship of the occasion—for the widow was on her knees praying, with big Bill keeping guard against any dangerous hysterical movement on her part.

With Dacey's help and directions the miners laid a couple of planks across the yawning mouth of the hole, taking care not to dislodge any more stones or debris in so doing, though now and then the clatter of a loosened rock was heard and the dull thud of the fall far below, causing a thrill of fear lest it might have crushed out life—of fear that, when the loosened stone descended, a loosened soul ascended.

"Me go down," persisted Ching.

From the center of the plank bridge strong arms lowered him by a rope tied around his waist. Lanterns were

lowered with him, and rugged faces bent over, eager eyes in vain seeking to scan the fearsome depths of what seemed a human sepulchre. After a long and painful time of waiting there at length came a cry from the mysterious depths:

"Pullee."

When the Chinaman was drawn up he bore in his arms the mute and limp form of little Tim.

"Dead," he said, "killed dead."

"And Levy?"

"Velly much dead. Head all bloke."

They laid the child in the strong, plump, vainly caressing arms of his mother. Swaying and moaning she sat under her burden of sorrow, bowed under the blow, defiant no more of fate, heedless of life, oblivious of her surroundings, indifferent to the sympathy of friends and the malice of enemies. She hugged the bruised little body to her bosom, and like a dirge came the hum of a cradle song wherewith she had often lulled her baby boy to sleep. Then, as she stroked his hair and felt her fingers wet and saw the dark red stain on them, she shuddered and sobbed.

The miners gathered in sympathy around her. It was the keen professional eye of big Bill that first noticed the mute message that Tim had unconsciously brought from the depths of the black pit.

"Look at his hair, his hands," gasped Bill. "It's gold, sure enough—maybe the lost vein."

But the widow, numbly uninterested, continued to rock and croon.

"Curses on the gold!" she exclaimed. "Oh, Tim, my

little Tim, why do you bring me gold in your dead hands?''

And then she uttered a shriek which rang weirdly through the mine. For the little form on her lap quivered, the blue eyes opened, and a tiny voice feebly protested: ''Oh, mammy, I thought I falled.''

CHAPTER XIII.

SEARCHING FOR NELL.

AS no man is a hero to his valet, so, presumably in an exaggerated degree, on account of the intensified subtleties of the toilet, no lady is a heroine to her maid.

Poor maids! theirs has been an unenviable time of it all through the centuries. Patrician Roman matrons and maids, haughty and irritable, prodded them with hair daggers and had them scourged at the pillar for venial errors and omissions. No doubt Iras and Charmion often shuddered in terror, fearing that a similar fate might soon be theirs, when their mistress Cleopatra had negligent slaves poisoned in her presence and watched them writhing in their death agonies. Queen Elizabeth of England occasionally used the whip on naughty maids of honor and drove them with blows and curses from her palace. In later times the average lady's maid was supposed to be a suave and humble hireling, carefully consulting every caprice of her mistress, ministering unto her with combs and brushes, pins and powder, regaling her with gossip, flattering her vanity, and subject to much uncertainty of temper, entailing sundry sharp scoldings accentuated with boxes on the ears.

But that type of boudoir helot, abject and submissive, has—save, perhaps, in some royal abodes in Central Africa, where olden time customs are conserved—prac-

tically passed away. The old order changeth, and there has come for the lady's maid the glorious period of emancipation, nay, more than emancipation, for *en revanche* the parties to the contract have changed power if not place, and now the trained and accomplished maid is the tyrant and dictator and the mistress the meek and submissive subject. So doth time work out its wondrous reverses and retributions.

There was, however, in the city of San Francisco, Cal., one particular maid of the modern order, one to the very manner born, she being French of the French of Paris, a dainty and bewitching little being, all piquancy, crispness, frills and ruffles, who was somewhat dismayed and bewildered with regard to the uncertainty of her position as tyrant or subject and therefore naturally unreconciled to her lot and protesting against fate.

The distressed tyrant's first name was Jeannette, and the unpromising subject, unsubjugated and mutinous, who had been allotted her, was the wealthy Widow Naughton, chief owner of the famous Old Thunder mine, in the Thunder mountains.

"Oh, mademoiselle, I am overcome to see you," breathlessly exclaimed Jeannette, as after a timid and hasty knock she entered the room in the Palace Hotel where Miss Maud Bronson was sitting in company with her father. "I am overcome to see you. Such a nervousness I have"—— and she laid a little white hand on the lace beneath which panted her bosom.

"Why, Jeannette!"

"Such a fear is on me, mademoiselle," continued in pretty misery the baffled little boudoir tyrant. "Oh, quel malheur, and after all my best I have truly done for

her! Mon Dieu, it is impossible that we make madame into ze society woman."

"What is the trouble, my dear?"

"Oh, ze dress. Magnifique! A dream! It is to her fine figure most becoming. Yet, helas! she likes it not; she says she would not for one million dollars be found dead in it."

"Ah, this is too bad."

Maud Bronson sighed. There came a twinkle in her father's eye, but he said gravely:

"Mrs. Naughton has her own independent and tenacious ideas in matters of dress. Though simple and conservative, they are not puritanical. Take care, Maud, lest you spoil a very worthy woman by putting in her head perilous notions and ambitions as to the thing called society. Not," he added as an afterthought, "that I believe you possibly could."

Maud smiled and tossed her head. "As for the thing called society, father, and its character in this city by the Golden Gate, let me inform you that our good friend Mrs. Naughton is as much at ease in a gathering as myself. Besides, she is keenly observant, yet, unfortunately, too dangerously candid, though friendly in her criticism and comment. In that way she often makes me nervous, puts me on the ragged edge. You can never tell what she's going to say now or next time."

Robert Bronson laughed. "Somebody has said that speech was given us to conceal thought. If so, that's not the particular vocal brand that Nance Naughton uses. The soft Pacific air or any other zephyrs will take a long time to dispel the breeziness of the mining camp. Sometimes when she becomes startlingly frank in her remarks,

I feel at once like heading back for refuge to the Thunder mountains."

"You are not ashamed of her, father?" asked Maud in affected reproof, inwardly laughing, for she more than suspected the existence of certain smoldering emotions entertained, probably as the natural result of propinquity, by her sire towards the Widow Naughton.

"Ashamed of her, Maud! How can you imagine such a thing?"—and secret fealty flashed into his blue eyes and lighted up his florid face, looking in its cincture of white hair and mutton chops like a rising moon surrounded by fleecy clouds. "Why, she is a woman of gold and pearls and diamonds, the impersonation of health and purity of mind and soul and body, and"——

"And still a young woman," put in Maud. "Father, I respect your enthusiasm on this fascinating subject, even if it is dangerous, but you may as well dismiss it from your mind, you old dear, for Mrs. Naughton is not at all of the marrying kind, and more's the pity, say I, for I'd dearly appreciate her as a stepmother. Ah, my paternal exponent of love's old dream, pardon me for touching your tender spot, but Mrs. Naughton is more interested in searching for her daughter than in looking out for a husband."

"Oh, pardon me, Jeannette," she exclaimed, suddenly starting up, "I must try to rescue you from your misery and tribulation. By the way, has your mistress got on this magnificent dress which she so strongly objects to wearing?"

"She had it on, mademoiselle, when I left her to come and have you beg of her to have sense and reason, but now I fear"——

"Come on, then; let us catch her and tie her before she is able to escape out of it."

"Catch her and tie her? Mon Dieu!" ejaculated Jeannette, as they departed on their dubious mission, "it would take a whole battalion to do that."

Left alone with himself and his thoughts, Mr. Robert Bronson arose and carefully surveyed himself in the mirror. The result of the inspection was evidently satisfactory, judging from his complacent smile. He was well-groomed, spick and span from head to foot, from silvery hair to shining shoes. The genteel monotony of his grey suit was broken by a vivid pink bouttonniere. He gave his whiskers an approving twitch, his mustache an encouraging twirl.

"Go it, Bronson, old chap," he said, nodding portentously to the Bronson in the glass, who nodded as portentously in return, "you look a winner, the race is worth it, and, you lucky dog, there's nothing in the field against you."

Donning his hat and picking up his gloves and cane, with jaunty and elastic step he sauntered forth.

Over a year had elapsed since the memorable Christmas at the Naughton mine in the Thunder mountains, the Christmas of conspiracy and explosion, death and discovery. The accidental location of the vein through the glittering fragments of metal brought up in the hands and hair of a child had proved the harbinger of wealth. A cascade of gold tumbled and was still tumbling into the capacious lap of the Widow Naughton. Robert Bronson and the speculators back of him, after having long groped vaguely and almost despairingly in the dark, reaped rich harvest of their investments. There was a

Danaean shower, the auriferous rain for which myriads have yearned, toiled and pined unto agony and death, and through which myriads of others, their parching thirst never fully allayed but malignantly stimulated, have drunk unto themselves disillusion, blight and ruin.

Gold, gold, gold—by day and by night it came up in generous quantity from the bowels of the Old Thunder mine. The faith of the original prospector and owner was amply and strikingly verified. With which reflection was combined others on the great and puzzling mysteries of life, its elusive desires, its mocking idols, its baffling uncertainties, its occasional seeming futility of endeavor. Daring conjecture recoiled, repulsed, from the awful veil of eternity, as glances were cast toward the lonely little cemetery, nine graves in all, on the mountain side, where under the light sandy soil reposed the remains of Tom Naughton.

It was under these circumstances that our party descended on San Francisco, our party consisting of Mrs. Nance Naughton and her young son Timothy, with whom was the colored boy Joe as aide and factotum, and the little Chinaman, and Mr. Robert Bronson and his daughter Maud.

"Nell, Nell, my daughter Nell," was the thought eager and uppermost in the widow's mind, and great was her interest and agitation as she found herself in the city by the Golden Gate. For was it not to San Francisco that Nell departed in company with the persuasive and silvery tongued "Frenchy" that saddest of Christmas eves when she, Nance, returned to find her cabin dark and desolate? Since that sudden flight of the singing bird the world,

so far as the mother was concerned, had absolutely swallowed up the daughter.

Nance had but small hope of finding her daughter in San Francisco. But there at all events she might obtain a clue. Since the flitting of Nell there had not been any sign or token of her whereabouts or existence.

"Why doesn't she write?" was the perplexing query that haunted Nance like a restless demon of evil, oppressing her with its morbid and persistent reiteration. "Why need she be ashamed of writing to her mother?"

And, like a deadly disease germ, an ugly thought again and again rejected, like a typhoid microbe by a healthy human system, at length began to rest and ripen in the pure bosom of the Catholic Irishwoman, a thought that sometimes caused her to shudder with fear and terror for the fate of her child and to fall on her knees in fervent supplication.

"And now, my dear Mrs. Naughton, that we are here in this big city, what places of interest shall we visit first?" Miss Bronson had inquired, the first morning after their arrival in San Francisco.

To which, rather to the amazement of her companion, this woman of the West, fresh from the mountain mining camps, promptly and eagerly replied:

"The singin' and dancin' and play actin' places, acushla—theaytres, I believe, they call them. I want to have a peep in at them the very first thing of all."

So ardent was the widow in her strange passion for the abodes of drama, opera and vaudeville, that Miss Bronson had much ado to induce her to make a brief shopping tour with the view of making some desirable changes and additions of costume, the female garb of the

mining camp not being exactly *en regle* for city streets, especially when presented to the public gaze in an automobile. So it was that with her symmetric figure arrayed in the daintiest of lace waists and ostrich feathers waving broadly over her sonsy face, that Nance started on her round of exploration.

"A singin' girl of the name of Nell Naughton," was she of whom information was earnestly and anxiously besought of the janitor sweeping the vestibule and the ticket seller in his box, of the stage door keeper, of actors and actresses that came and went, of scene painters and scene shifters, and finally—at the first place of entertainment they visited—of his august high mightiness the manager himself, type of a certain class, a burly man with a huge mustache and a double chin, his glossy silk hat on the side of his head, a large black cigar in his mouth, lolling back in his chair with his thumbs in the arm holes of his vest and his feet on the desk, eyeing his visitors with languid curiosity as they were ushered into his office.

He listened with perfunctory interest while Mrs. Naughton stated the object of her quest.

"Can you tell me, lady," he asked, "what name the girl took when going on the stage?"

"She didn't go on the stage," replied Nance, in utter innocence of the language of the profession, "the stage had stopped runnin' at the time. She went on the railroad."

The manager stared in suspicion that he was being made the butt of affected misunderstanding, but a glance assured him that such was not the case.

"Green as the eternal hills!" he mused. "I wonder

is this a Deadville product or merely a delegation from Alfalfa Center."

"And when she ran away," continued Nance, "my little girl had no name, of course, but the one she was born to and got, which was mighty good enough for her—first name Nell, short for Helen, from her aunt, second name Naughton, from her father and her mother—that's me. She left word that if she came here she'd sure strike pay gravel and strike it rich."

"Alfalfa Center be darned—Deadville!" mentally commented the manager.

"Left more'n a year ago, you tell me," he said, "and nary a word from her since. Ah, well, poor thing, maybe she has her reasons. Most of them have, and I've known"——

He abruptly checked himself, for Nance, tense with intuitive discernment of his thought, was glaring on him with baleful eyes, and her face was crimson with shame and anger.

"Don't you dar say it!" she sternly enjoined. "Don't you dar for the shade of a second think ill of my Nell! She is as pure and white in her soul as the snow out of God's heaven, and I'd have you to know that and to get it off by heart."

The manager threw away his cigar, arose, took off his hat and bowed.

"Madam," he said, "I deeply respect a mother's feelings and I crave a thousand pardons if I have said anything to hurt them. If you will kindly leave your name and address I will make particular inquiries about your daughter and if I learn anything I shall not fail to let you know."

"Over a year is a pretty long time," he said later, as he courteously escorted them to the door. "Actors and singers come and go by the hundred, but this old ship goes on forever—at least I hope it will last my time. As for girls changing their names when they go on the stage—that means, Mrs. Naughton, joining the profession—why, that's the general rule. Molly Brown becomes Blanche de Beauvoir, and Kitty Casey blossoms into Mignon Mignonette, and Betsy Bangs scintillates as Sacharissa Silvervoice, and so on. And now, ladies, I sincerely hope your search will be crowned with success. So long."

"Hey, Billy," he said to a stage hand, who heard the unwonted mandate in astonishment, "see these ladies safely across the street, so the cars won't run over them."

"Gee whiz," he commented, "the big one is a peach all right, but a dangerously green one."

From playhouse to playhouse the pair pursued their mission of inquiry.

"A singin' girl of the name of Nell Naughton."

Even on the lips of the mother the question grew dreary and monotonous through dint of repetition. They invaded managers' offices, they trailed through stuffy sawdust strewn passages, they intruded on rehearsals, they learned in a dim way the mysteries of life behind the scenes. At length Nance Naughton, tenacious in her quest, refused to take up any longer the time and company of her good-natured and sympathetic companion.

"Sure it's worn you off your feet I have, avourneen," she said to Miss Bronson, "and worried you haulin' you round streets and alleys when you ought to be away

enjoyin' life in your own way with them elegant friends you've made, while I go ahead with me daughter-huntin'. Something seems to keep whisperin' to me that Nell is near me and that I'm likely to run across her any day."

The news that the recently arrived widow from the Thunder mountains mining camp was a female Monte Cristo soon got abroad among certain social circles, some of whose members were generously willing to show the new arrival how to spend her money with grace and dispatch. Maud Bronson, with shrewd discrimination in forming acquaintanceships, undertook the delicate yet formidable task of inducting her and her father's friend into society.

"Acushla," said Nance in reply to the representations of her lively young chaperon, "sure I don't care about meetin' these fine people you tell me of—me ways aren't their ways. But if you want me to go among them, well, for the fun of it, I'll go."

So Maud the indefatigable had milliners sent and samples brought to the hotel, that the opulent owner of the Old Thunder mine might be suited and measured for her gladsome society raiment. In the sanctity of her suite the ladies with the tape measures surrounded the majestic Diana-like form with caution resembling that of cowboys seeking to rope an untamed broncho.

And now, on the eve of a fashionable reception and ball at which the vivacious young lady had planned to introduce her friend, the triumph of the dressmaker's art had been accomplished.

"Magnifique!" the French maid had pronounced it. Yet Miss Bronson, as she tapped gently at Nance's door, experienced a certain feeling of doubt and trepidation.

CHAPTER XIV.

A DECOLLETE EFFECT.

IMMEDIATELY inside the chief entrance to the elegant and costly suite of the rich, ripe and rugged Widow Naughton in the Palace Hotel, sat with folded arms, in full and tingling consciousness of splendor of attire and high responsibility of position, the colored boy Joe. At intervals he arose, stalked to the mirror and surveyed himself with exhilarating approval from head to foot—his natty green uniform bedizened with shining buttons, his immaculate collar and gloves, his white breeches, his shining boots—for Miss Maud Bronson, who had superintended his outfitting and was endeavoring to direct his training, had favored English sartorial domestic ideals in his outfit.

Oh, the wonder and charm of it all! Joe felt like a king come into his own. Under the continuous elevating influence of his new raiment, neat, well-fitting, glittering, he assumed a marked dignity of demeanor and stride, whether carrying parcels for his mistress in the street or visiting cards to her on a silver salver in her apartments.

What will not clothes do, in the way both of elevating and degrading, to the men who wear them, from the monarch in his purple to the convict in his stripes!

"Golly, what a change from drivin' goldarned crazy mules down in Old Thunder!" thought Joe in chuckling self-congratulation.

As yet Nance Naughton viewed her factotum and sentinel with covert bewilderment and apprehension; she was not fully accustomed to the transformation, and was vaguely endeavoring to grasp and realize it.

" 'Tis a fine showman you'd make, Joe agra," she said, "a fine showman entirely. I've seen worse than you on the street, sellin' bottles of medicine for a travellin' doctor in a wagon. Oh, what a foolish girl, with her highfalutin' notions, is that Maud Bronson! But sure it doesn't hurt to let the good-natured darlin' have her way in a thrifle like this. And besides, Joe, it keeps you out of harm."

A descendant of the insurgents who floated the green flag with the uncrowned harp over the hills of her native Wicklow in 1798, she had grave national doubts as to the propriety of the color for a servant's livery.

"Only that I know you so well, Joe, me boy," she said impressively, "and that I think a good dale of you, I'd feel that I was insultin' the dust of me patriotic forefathers who carried the pike against the Sassenach, to allow a nigger to wear that sacred color—'the color of our martyred dead, our own immortal green,' as the ould song says. Be sure, on peril of your body and sowl, that you do nothing to bring it in disgrace. And why don't you keep it clane, bad luck to you? Do you think it's down in the mine you are instead of in a lady's apartments? Turn round here, you dirty divil, till I brush yer back."

One day the Widow Naughton created a mild sensation in the corridors and office of the hotel when amid groups of amused and gaping guests she led in by the ear her black factotum, door guard and page, and con-

ducted him, scared and docile, to the elevator, meanwhile making vehement promises of condign castigation. She had caught him, in all the green and gold glory of his livery, playing craps with other Ethiopians in the alley! From the sounds which subsequently emanated from the widow's apartments it was evident that little Joe was doing poignant penance for his unwitting affront to the heraldic color of Ireland.

When Maud Bronson, accompanied by the French maid Jeannette, was admitted by her pupil in page etiquette, bowing and smiling, to the suite of the Widow Naughton, she found the latter sitting moodily on a sofa, her bent face wearing an expression of doubt and discontent. On their entrance she arose hastily and approached them. Maud uttered a sudden cry of admiration.

"Oh, Mrs. Naughton, you are perfectly beautiful!"

Fresh from the hands of the fashionable dressmakers, aided and abetted by Jeannette, the relict of Tom Naughton, with shapely bust and generous shoulders swelling over a "confection" of lace, silk and velvet, of which the prevailing tone was a rich purple, looked stately and regal, a very queen among women. The select modistes had worked their wily way with her in the critical matter of decolleté effect, under the approving eye of the French maid, and then discreetly fled ere she had had time to realize the enormity of their exposures. The deft fingers of a professional hairdresser had built her great mass of dark glossy tresses into a startlingly becoming edifice of massive glistening rolls. A single row of diamonds sparkled as if in triumph on the strong, rounded neck that had never bowed beneath adversity. She seemed to diffuse a personal ozone of health and strength

and wholesomeness that despised "skin food" and laughed at "beauty treatment."

And yet, in all this exhibit of glowing physical health and rustling and scintillating grandeur of attire, she was not happy, but visibly embarrassed and annoyed. She appealed to Maud Bronson as if for remedy and redress.

"Oh, avourneen, isn't this awful! Look at the state that tall, silly, foostherin' idiot of a dhressmaker has left me in. And this poor little fool of a French girl you got for me is no better. I don't feel meself at all."

"But, my dear Mrs. Naughton, it is certainly a magnificent gown," said Miss Bronson, "and, bless my soul, how immensely well it becomes you!"

"Oh, madame, it is a dream!" ejaculated Jeannette, clasping her hands in soulful admiration, her eyes moist with Gallic enthusiasm at this prodigious triumph of the toilette.

"Dream—it is a nightmare," declared Nance, "a nightmare with a long tail," and she experimentally whisked and circulated around her feet the shimmering train of the garment, as a mysterious appendage the object of which had yet to be elucidated. "There's lots of good material going to loss right there on the floor, doing nothing but just gathering up dust and things," she continued. "Now, if she'd only taken a piece out of the tail and put it into the neck of the waist, there'd be some sense in it and I wouldn't feel in such a shameless and scandalous condition. Besides, darlin', I'm afeard that, stripped like this, I might take me death of cowld."

"Oh, mammy, how grand you are!" exclaimed in open-mouthed astonishment little Tim, who entered in company with the Chinaman, whose almond eyes were

attracted by the great change which attire had made in the appearance of his mistress, this surprising dame of the occident.

"But, oh, mammy, why don't you finish up?" asked Tim. "Your dress is all fallen down round your neck, like you sometimes used to wear it at the camp."

Maud Bronson laughed. "Ha, ha, that's quite right, Tim. I've caught you there, my dear Mrs. Naughton. Don't talk to me of your catching cold. What you could bear in the mining camp you can certainly tolerate in high society."

"I wish high society was a little higher round the neck," rejoined Nance. "I'd rather be dressed as a woman than stripped as a lady. You see, out at the camp, acushla, an open neck was all right and nice and cool on a hot day when one was washin' or ironin', and there was nobody to make any remarks; but here, before a lot of dallyin' doll men—well, I have no objection to showin' them me back, but it must be covered."

"A man, be cripes!" she exclaimed, at the sound of a masculine voice in the outer room, and seizing a convenient doyley she threw it around her shoulders.

"Now, Jeannette, avourneen," she said coaxingly to the maid, "won't you try and find me a piece of lace that you can baste nicely round the neck of this gown? It's beautiful, I agree with you, as far as it goes, but the trouble is it don't go far enough to suit me. Now, darlin', do what you can for me."

"Certainly, madame, I will fix it," replied Jeannette; "but madame will not object to one leetle bit square."

"Square, certainly, square and dacent," conceded Nance. "Go get the lace."

And the mollified boudoir tyrant disappeared in quest of the desired article.

So did our woman of the West compromise on the critical decolleté question, on which taste and custom differs so widely in social circles, among many peoples and in many lands. The "unspeakable Turk" and the Egyptian insist on their women swathing themselves to the very eyes from the public gaze. The most moral tribe in Africa dispenses with all artificial clothing as indecently suggestive. These, of course, are extremes. They were almost unknown as the usages and predilections of newspaper gossip society to breezily independent Nance Naughton and as little taken into acccount by her in striking what she considered the golden mean.

"In the name of modesty, cover my bosom," was Marie Antoinette's request to her executioners as she stood in the shadow of the guillotine, and the same sentiment animated the owner of the Old Thunder mine in entering into select society.

The newcomer was Robert Bronson, smiling and debonnair, dainty and unexceptionable of apparel, graceful as a silver birch gilt by the sunset of an autumn evening.

His eyes lighted up with delighted approval as they rested on the Diana-like form of the widow, emphasized by the rich attire of fashion, to him not detracted from a whit by the crude and tantalizing resource of the doyley. To him it was an enthralling revelation. For a few moments, to the veiled amusement of his daughter, he gazed in rapt admiration on the goddess-like form before him.

"In grace a Greek, in strength a Roman,
Creation's gem, a perfect woman."

"Good evening kindly, Mr. Bronson," cheerfully hailed Nance. "And how do you like me in my society regimentals?"

"I am simply dazzled."

"Shocked, maybe, you mean," laughed Nance. "Mr. Bronson, I feel half frightened at the thought of meetin' all these fine, high-up people tonight, and with a rale count among them. I'm afraid 'tis makin' ye ashamed of me I'll be."

"Ashamed of you!" ejaculated Mr. Bronson, ruthlessly trampling on his rigorous English ideas of staid respectability, largely made up of precise verbiage and correct deportment. "Mrs. Naughton, you do yourself and us a grave injustice when you think you must conform to any straightlaced and ridiculous social laws to keep your friends from being ashamed of you."

"Sure it's very good of you to speak so kindly," acknowledged Nance, with a rush of gratitude and confidence—of confidence which promptly begat proportionate confidence.

"No, no, Mrs. Naughton," went on her admirer, conscious that the warning gaze of his daughter was upon him, but still determined and impulsive as a Romeo and defiantly deeming there was no time like the present, "not kindly, but sincerely, honestly. I wish I dare speak more plainly, Mrs. Naughton—and maybe I shall, here and now. I wish from my inmost heart to tell you—to ask of you—to beg of you"——

"Don't, Mr. Bronson, don't speak," entreated Nance,

with intuitive apprehension of what was coming; "it would be a mistake. I want your friendship."

But the silvery-haired suitor, his florid face, in its shining aureole, radiantly intense and aflame with *la grande passion,* was not to be evaded in his ardent rapid advance.

"No, Nance," he protested vehemently, "there is no mistake. I need not, I cannot be silent any longer—my daughter understands—I would make you my wife."

"Father!" exclaimed Maud sharply. She understood, of course, but not to the extent that her generally quiet and undemonstrative sire would all at once have proved such a whirlwind wooer.

The woman of the West gazed on her suitor with mingled pity and reproach, then sank into a chair.

"It is a great honor you would do me, Mr. Bronson," she said in a low voice, vibrant with emotion, "a great and precious honor, coming from a good and honest man and the father of a kind, sweet colleen. I thank you from my heart. I couldn't marry a man without love. I loved one man, he is dead, and—I ask your pardon."

She sunk her face on her hands and sobs shook her broad white shoulders, as came back to her in vivid fitful panorama the simple marriage ceremony at the altar foot in the humble chapel of Avoca, the departure from Ireland, the long years of toil and hardship, disaster and disappointment in the mining camp, and death, and that lone grave on the rocky hillside.

"Father, you had better leave us," whispered Maud, and Robert Bronson, mute before the upwelling of the sacred spring he had unwittingly stirred, meekly and silently took his departure.

"Come, come, dear, cheer up and don't let the love-making of that foolish old father of mine upset you," coaxingly said Maud, patting the marbly shoulders from which the partly concealing doyley had fallen. "Remember, I want to see you look your best tonight. And don't break down, you foolish woman, if men come about you with propositions of marriage. They just naturally cannot help themselves. When you conquered my father you're liable to conquer anybody. Maybe the next admirer at your feet will be the Count de Vaudray himself."

"Well, if it is, acushla, his name will be 'count him out.'" Nance was herself again; it was as though the rain cloud had passed and the sun was shining and the birds singing in the vale of Avoca. "I will be glad to meet your fine people, Maud, though 'tis little I care for all the fuss and fashion. It will be seein' and learnin' life to meet the likes of them—and maybe, please God, I may be able to get some news of Nell.

"Now what can Joe be laughin' at again? 'Most everything that fool nigger sees around here gives him a fit that shakes the buttons off his green jacket."

The cachinnation of the sable sentinel at the widow's door was due to the unexpected arrival of two distinguished visitors from Old Thunder.

"What, Jack Dacey!—Jack, and, bress my soul, big Bill Hinckley! Lossy massy, boys, whar did yer drop outer? And ketch onter de togs! And how d'ye get inter them? Bettcher dey had to trow yer down and tie yer before dey got dem on. Oh, my! oh, my! what a big change from Old Thunder!"

But big Bill had got the colored door guard by the arm and was turning him slowly round and round, raptly surveying the symphony in green and gold, the natty linen, the white breeches and shining boots.

"Hang me for a horsethief if it ain't Muleboy Joe!" he exclaimed, and with weird oaths he muttered his astonishment and admiration, much to the chuckling delight of the colored brother.

"Hullo, Prince Joseph, what is your particular line?" inquired Jack Dacey—"ambassador from the Congo or plenipotentiary from Liberia, ostrich feather and elephant tusk envoy from the Swahili country or high muckamuck of the Tararas? Say, Bill, ain't he a thing of brilliant beauty!"

"Can you beat it?" huskily ejaculated Bill.

"Never mind, boys, I see you've not done so badly yourself in the fashion plate line," said a voice behind them, and turning they beheld, to their amazement, Nance—Nance, not in the plain and simple garb of the mining shack, but Nance radiant and majestic, arrayed in rich trailing robes, with diamonds flashing on her perfect neck.

The sturdy miners, themselves recently transformed in appearance by San Francisco barbers and tailors, looked inquiringly at each other and then again at her.

" 'Clare to heaven, Nance!" fairly gasped Jack Dacey.

But Bill Hinckley advanced cheerfully and confidently and held out a large hand, marvelously clean.

"Shake, old gal," he said, "and hooray fer Old Thunder. These yer city folks hain't got nothing on us.

We've got 'em goin'. Nothin' too good for us in this burg. Cast your admirin' eyes on these swell outfits. Look at that yer hand on holiday service. We couldn't get more attention if we were the Czar of Rooshia. Why, while one feller was a-scrapin' of my face, another was a-shinin' of my shoes, and a fairy with a hair wheel on her head two feet wide was a-scrubbin' like mischief to put style even into my finger nails. Oh, it's great! Can you beat it? That's what I say, Nance, in the name of boundin' billygoats, can you beat it?"

"You're right in it, Bill, I see," said Nance, "yours for the giddy city and the big smoke. Sit down, boys, and think yourselves in the dining shack at good Old Thunder. Don't be afeard; the chairs are soft but ye won't hurt them. Ring for refreshments, Joe, and take the gentlemen's hats."

The grinning page promptly executed the first part of the order, but when it came to the second he winced, hesitated and burst into an uncontrollable guffaw.

"What're you gigglin' about now, you smoked spalpeen?" demanded his mistress.

"Foh de Lawd's sake!" chuckled the proud of garb. "Me in dese clothes to take de hat of ole Bill Hinckley? Not in a t'ousand years! Yer able yerself to take keer of yer nice new hat, ain't you, Bill?"

"Get out of here, you good-for-nothing scamp," exclaimed Nance testily, yet with a sense of amusement. "All my good trainin' is lost on you. Only for I don't want to spile this dress I'd take you by the scruff of the neck and kick the divil out of you. Give me your hats, boys, I'll tend to you meself. That fellow is a persecution."

"Tie a can to him, Nance, and let him go out and make his livin' as an organ grinder's monkey," growled Bill as he yielded up his headgear.

"Nance, you're a sure winner," enthusiastically remarked Jack, his susceptibilities stirred to their deepest depths by the spectacle of superb femininity before him—the proudly poised, independent head; the strong, pleasant, kindly face; the shapely neck, worthy of its flashing string of diamonds; the fair bosom rising over the billows of lace, the rounded arms that had oft wielded pick and shovel, now banded with massive gleaming gold.

And a great glamor descended upon Jack Dacey. His thoughts reeled and swam in the delicious intoxication of her presence.

"Who'd have ever believed it, Bill?" he whispered to his companion as their hostess busied herself at the sideboard.

"I'm done," solemnly replied Bill, "I ain't got nothin' to say—nothin'!"

"So I have changed, eh, old pals," said Nance, as she reseated herself. "And ye hardly knew me. How could ye know me when, as Shawn-na-Scoob, the Mayor of Limerick, said, I don't know meself? The fine folks here are tryin' to make me think I'm somebody else ever since I came, but I'm afeard 'tis they will have a mighty hard job of it. But come, tell me all about the camp and Old Thunder."

"There be little to tell," replied Bill; "the mine is turnin' out the yellow stuff purty fast. But it wasn't to talk about that, Nance, but something that specially concerns yourself, that's brought us to 'Frisco."

She looked searchingly and anxiously from one to the other.

"It's about Nell!"

"You've hit it, ma'am, plugged it fair and square. Let me tell you, it's not the girl's fault that you don't know where she is. That was all due to the plottin' of an enemy of yours who made use of a half-breed cayuse to fool and deceive you. Maybe I'll be able to make the case clear to you. No need to remind you of the findin' of the gold at Old Thunder, you'll never forget that."

"Troth and I'll not, it's painted on me very soul."

"And the death of old Levy."

"Yes, yes."

"You remember how we caught Langford, the overseer of the next mine, tryin' to escape, and how you interfered and saved his life, and how we handed him over to the sheriff. Langford, you know, was sent to prison for tryin' twice to destroy the mine, one attempt causin' the death of your husband. Well, Ebenezer Langford's mine blowin' stunts are over for fair. He's dead and done for."

"Unfortunate man," said Nance, "he was ambitious for the money, like the rest of us, but he might have earned for himself a better end."

"He tried to make his escape last week," continued Bill, "and got shot by the guard. After knowin' that he was about to hike out into a new country he asked that a message be sent to you, a message that will open your eyes. He said as how your girl had written letter after letter to you from 'Frisco, but the letters were held up from you out of the mail, himself payin' for every stolen letter."

Nance clasped her hands and raised her eyes in thanksgiving.

"Heaven be praised, it's all cleared up now! The poor child wasn't ashamed to write to me, after all. But where is she? Where on earth has that fool Frenchman taken her? Boys, I've tried and I'm tryin' hard as I can, but I can't find tale or tidings of her."

Her volatile juvenile offspring, surfeited with surreptitiously sliding down bannisters and playing with bellboys, came bouncing into the room, accompanied by his inseparable Ching. The curious scrutiny of the miners wandered from the boy's laughing face to his velvet suit, flaring red bow and broad lace collar.

"Well, I'm jiggered if it ain't little Tim!" exclaimed Jack Dacey. "Such happenin's, and all in one day."

"What's here—a freak show?" jerked Tim with a pertness acquired of city boy contact.

"Bad luck to you, Tim Naughton," said his mother, catching him by the ear, "if I never do another thing in my life I'll skin you for that. I don't mind your bein' a fool six days out of the week, but keep sense in your skull to know your friends when you see them."

"Friends?" repeated Tim, and his face slowly lit up with recognition. "Ah, I know—big Bill and Jack Dacey. Great place 'Frisco, eh?—here's where I go in for sport."

"Me too—dead glame splort!" put in Ching, and he executed some weird terpsichorean antics supposed to be illustrative of the abandon of effervescent pleasure.

"Can you beat it?" moaned Bill.

"Not in a dog's age," replied Jack, with a look of

unutterable sadness. "This darned yellow terror is gettin' on my nerves."

"Boys, be sure to come and dine with me tomorrow," said the widow as she dismissed her friendly visitors. "Maybe 'tis a rale count I'll have to dinner with ye. But sure there's nothing too good for Old Thunder."

CHAPTER XV.

A CRUCIAL EXPERIENCE IN SOCIETY.

THERE was a crush at the assembly. A considerable section or faction or clique of San Francisco society was out in force. White arms and shoulders gleamed and diamonds sparkled under the electric lights. There was a clatter of conversation of the rapid, eager, breathless kind that seems to consider life all too short for the indulgence of wit or alleged wit, of gossip, banter and repartee. And the gossip was not of the kindest kind either, it exhibiting an occasional soupçon of the piquant sauce of scandal.

"This is the night that we study the genealogy of the town," languidly observed Miss Harrington, cynical belle of many seasons. "And it would need an expert to do it; it certainly is the largest and most interesting —possibly because the most mixed—gathering of the year."

"The main attraction is, I understand," remarked Mr. De Camp, "the now rather ordinary one of a visiting foreign nobleman."

"What brand of title may his august excellency have on sale?" sarcastically inquired Mr. Newburry. The latter, whose profitable skill with the cards was known in many a club and on many an ocean liner, entertained a natural contempt for titled foreigners of the impecu-

nious order—they were not worth cultivating; more acceptable to him by far the home plutocrat than the foreign aristocrat, especially in the frequent case where the latter was financially small game—rare but comparatively worthless.

"I'm sure I don't know what glittering degree of nobility he places in the market," said Mr. De Camp, "or what the ambitious daughter of wealth that gets him will draw—a German prince or a Russian grand duke, an English earl, Italian duke or French count. Whatever he claims to be, this gathering shows the gullibility of the American people."

"Well, everybody I meet claims to know all about him," said Miss Harrington. "It's fashionable to be posted on such important social matters. For me I must lose no time in getting me copies of the British Peerage and the Almanach de Gotha—else I shall be out of the race and out of the game."

"Pshaw, there's no trusting such books," exclaimed De Camp, with the decision of a superior authority. "Money can pay for a bogus pedigree and for having it published. I don't much like those dubious foreign titles or the men that wear them. Give me the sterling nobility of American manhood, give me the story of our grand old colonial families, of the men who braved the savages, who conquered the wilderness"——

"Hear, hear!" laughed Newburry. "Go it, De Camp! Don't forget Clarke and Fremont and Marcus what's-his-name, that saved Oregon."

"Dear me, Clarence De Camp," yawned Miss Harrington, "a political rally or just a school commencement?"

"His eloquence stirs my blood," said Newburry. "I once felt as enthusiastic as Clarence did and entertained similar elevating patriotic sentiments. But when I went in for genealogy in the hope of shaking down a Revolutionary colonel or two out of our family tree I almost got heart failure at the dread lest in my researches I might run up against a Delaware whipping post or even a Pennsylvania gallows tree. It's highly critical work, I tell you, this American family hunting, and if the neighbors ever came to know"——

But at a peculiar glance from De Camp the glib speaker halted in some confusion and bunglingly changed the subject, while he secretly cursed his over fluent tongue; it was not a far cry back to the pioneer days of California and there was still a vague floating memory that a collateral ancestor of Mr. De Camp had met a tragic yet not uncommon death at the time as the result of a crucial essay as a road agent.

"Oh, I have met the count, and he is perfectly lovely!" said vivacious and gushing Miss Nina Wilson, floating up with rustle of silk and lace and tingling drift of perfume. "He is a veritable French aristocrat, with oh, such soulful eyes and distinguished manners, the curls of the Apollo Belvidere and the cutest little black mustache and imperial."

But Newburry, the title-hater, shook his head.

"It is truly shocking," he remarked with the severity of an inexorable social censor and dragon-like guardian of morals, "that utter strangers are taken up and forced upon old respectable families. Why, I have learned *sub rosa* that this gentleman of title was obliged to leave his own country on account of his escapades."

"So?" tentatively remarked Miss Harrington. "This is really interesting."

"I told you so," portentously declared Mr. De Camp.

"Then you've both got it all wrong," fluttered Miss Wilson. "The true story of the count—and I have it at first hand—is that he really never knew his own people, and that for urgent family reasons—ahem, a child of love, you know, he was sent away to save the family name and honor."

"Remarkably curious way of saving it," said Miss Harrington. "I presume before they let him take the name and honor along they took the precaution of insuring it."

"They sent it in cold storage," said Miss Wilson.

"Oh, ridiculous!" exclaimed De Camp, who plumed himself on his activity and penetration as a *quid nunc*. "I know from the count's personal friend that he has a record in Europe. The wife of an ambassador played a prominent part in the story."

"What a romantically fascinating individual!" commented Miss Harrington.

"There seems enough mystery about Count de Vaudray," drawled Newburry, "to make him supremely interesting and win him enthusiastic welcome to the bosom of the elite of the social set."

They laughed merrily; it seemed a titillating society joke, of the kind to give spice to a Newport pink tea or monkey party.

"Well, if mystery is a source of interest and popularity our newly caught count will have to share its honors with others tonight," said lively Miss Wilson, stretching out after fresh game.

"Why, are there more of the interesting family?" inquired De Camp.

And then this anvil quartette returned with vim to their congenial work, their busy hammers ringing on the reputation of a woman.

"A woman with an unfathomable past, apparently unlimited wealth, and certainly unlimited effrontery," explained Newburry—"one Mrs. Nance Naughton, late of heaven knows where. I understand we are indebted to the English girl, Miss Maud Bronson, for this new acquisition and mystery."

"Not so much a mystery as a sensation, and a rather vulgar one," commented Edna Harrington, with a contemptuous toss of the head and a laugh of derision. "Is it possible you have not heard the story of this new would-be social lioness? It is a plain, unvarnished, unfragrant one. It is public property that she is from the mining camps, where she made her money running a dance hall."

"Well, well, this is news," said De Camp; "the night promises to be tolerable after all."

"Oh, but I am sure that is not the true story," pouted Nina Wilson, promptly jealous of her reputation as an amateur society reporter of saffron propensities. "I have it from a close friend that the woman's money was made by her husband, a wild, reckless fellow, a burglar or moonshiner or knight of the road, or something of that sort—I really don't remember. He was finally shot by a sheriff who had pursued him ever so many miles."

"How romantic!" sneered Miss Harrington. "She must of course be interesting when Maud takes her up."

"That is the one great trouble with Maud—so careless in her alliances and friendships, you know."

But now a sudden sense of guilt and confusion descended on the little knot of scandal mongers, male and female. Their gossipy prattle was suspended like the chattering of monkeys alarmed at the approach of the panther, the chirping of small birds when the falcon sails across the sky. With graceful and even majestic tread down the center of the hall came a handsome, matronly woman of stately bearing and almost heroic proportions, richly and becomingly attired in the unexceptionable style wherein fashion goes hand in hand with modesty. Accompanying her was a slender and charming young lady who occasionally, on sight of an acquaintance, halted to perform the ceremony of introduction.

Nance took her social honors with the candid delight and excitement of a child, of a youthful *debutante* at her first ball. It was all so strange and new to her—the brilliantly lighted hall, the pervading strains of music, the rich hangings and decorations, the changeful, animated throng laughing and chatting as if their very lives depended on it, the men in their queer black swallow-tailed coats and expansive white shirt fronts—waiters she had taken them for at first, the same as those in the hotel dining-room, and her youthful companion and guide nearly fainted when she tapped a millionaire's adolescent son on the shoulder and requested him to find them a table and bring them some crackers and cheese.

"Oh, these are all gentlemen, not waiters, Mrs. Naughton," explained Miss Bronson.

"Then why do they dress like waiters, acushla?"

complained Nance. "I never saw any gentlemen except waiters dressed like this before—and sure, waiters are gentlemen, too, even if they do take tips to make up for low wages. It's wonderful, acushla, the quare ways and styles of the quality when they go in for diversion. The gentlemen dress like waiters, and the ladies dress like—what? Oh, my!"

Her cheeks flushed as her uneasy gaze glanced furtively from one decolleté maid or dame to another. The gowns were very elegant, she thought, but in some individual cases alarmingly short of material.

She was conscious of drawing the curious, critical, inquiring glances of many, but presently she bore them with indifference, defiance, amusement. She was as yet a vigorous and full-blooded woman, throbbing and pulsing with life, and the novelty of her experience appealed to her and thrilled her—her entry into this queer world of society which was so utterly strange to her.

"Heavens! here comes Miss Bronson and her amazon," ejaculated the cynical De Camp, pinchbeck dictator of a snobbish social clique.

"I hope she will not inflict her upon us," said *la belle* Harrington of many seasons barren of conquest.

"She will never have the effrontery to compel us to notice the barmaid," indignantly whispered flippant and fastidious Miss Wilson, connoisseur of gingery gossip.

To their dismay, which was, however, more affected than otherwise, Maud Bronson, like a pleasure yacht guiding a battleship, steered her imposing, wholesome and presentable charge right up to the little coterie of genteel "knockers" and proceeded to give her kindly introduction.

"Miss Harrington, Mrs. Naughton."

For a moment Nance seemed undecided what to do—shaking hands was to her a cold and formal style of salutation for woman meeting woman, and mere bowing was still more chilly and unsatisfactory. Then in a trice she had her strong, plump arms round the patricianly poised neck of Miss Edna Harrington and her lips met those of that astounded and embarrassed social scion with a resounding smack that was heard far and wide.

The kissee drew herself up in haughty indignation and ostentatiously wiped her mouth. The osculator wiped her own nose and cheek with her hands and looked at the result in surprise.

"White powder!" she exclaimed, "and red powder, too, be cripes! Darlin'," she said to Edna, with solicitude which betrayed ignorance of some details of a lady's toilet, "there's some sort of strange dust on your face. Let me wipe it off for you, acushla."

But Miss Harrington, her face flaming in patches, had fled through the tittering crowd.

As for the other members of the group, they were variously "charmed" and "delighted" and "overwhelmed with pleasure," as they effusively expressed it, to meet the woman of the West. But Nance attempted no further friendly salutation of the osculatory variety.

At length she moved away with Maud to meet Robert Bronson, whose face lighted up with pleasure and admiration on beholding her. Was this fine looking woman, splendid of shape and elegant of attire, the same being as the strange, rugged, seemingly half wild and wholly uncouth creature who, attired in the rough garb of a male stage driver, had once given him and his daugh-

ter a thrilling, breakneck, nerve-racking drive over the mountains, swaying over the brink of chasms of terrific depth, with what seemed dreadful death awaiting them at every turn? He tried in vain to realize it.

"She certainly is a magnificent woman," said the now admiring Newburry.

"Much too stout," objected Nina Wilson.

"Such a vulgar display of jewelry," added Edna Harrington.

"More pearls than pearl powder, my dear," pointedly remarked Nina, upon which the other flashed upon her a look of resentment.

"I begin to believe the robber story," charitably remarked De Camp; "that blaze of jewelry suggests it."

"At all events," said Newburry, with sudden chivalry, "I must say that the robber's wife, barmaid, dance hall director, or whatever you kindly choose to term her, has a natural ease and grace which some high-toned fair ones of my acquaintance would be glad to own."

"You are such an authority on deportment" snapped Miss Harrington, her slender stock of amiability rudely scattered by the recent kissing incident. "The ease and grace of a mining-camp dance hall! But it is so hard for some people to distinguish ease from boldness. Ye gods, here she comes again!"

"Ah, welcome back, and please sit down here, Mrs. Naughton," sweetly invited Miss Wilson, as she made place beside her on an ottoman. "And do tell us something about the mining life."

"There's little to tell about it," modestly said the proprietress of the Old Thunder mine, "and 'tis little I care to bother with talk about meself to so many nice and

clever people, who must have had much more interesting experiences."

But now a sudden stir at the front entrance changed the trend of the conversation; the commonplace once more gave place to the pungent whiff of scandal, and it became the lot of Mrs. Anne Naughton to listen in amazement and shame to the comments and revelations of the unfamiliar class of people around her.

"It is Count de Vaudray at last," said Edna Harrington. "But pshaw, he has brought that woman with him, as usual. What are we coming to? Why, she is the talk of the town."

"Very interesting, I'm sure," chattered De Camp. "Might I ask, is this another mystery? The air is full of doubt."

There was a general laugh, of which Nance, listening, was puzzled to know the reason or motive.

"A mere nobody keeping her own establishment, her own carriage," went on Miss Harrington, with all the seeming merciless vehemence of outraged virtue, "apparently spending money without limit and audaciously breaking into society as if she were to the manner born. It is absolutely shameful."

"Shocking as it is doubtful," said Miss Wilson.

"Oh, come, come, ladies," demurred Newburry, "whence this revulsion of feeling? Why have you turned so suddenly against the girl? You cordially received her before the count came."

"Ay, of course, before the count came," retorted Miss Harrington, tossing her head, "before nobility smiled on her, before De Vaudray paid her such devoted and significant attention. We received her for her art, for

her undoubted vocal powers, but that was before she began to flaunt and rustle in Paris gowns and to sparkle in mysterious jewelry."

"For shame!" muttered Newburry, his manhood at length shrinking from the breath of slander that drifted like noxious vapors from an open sewer. "Why should she not accept the attentions of De Vaudray if she feels they are honest and well meant? Does it not occasionally happen that a man of title falls in love with and marries a singer or an actress? For me this young vocalist seems as innocent as a child."

"Innocent as an angel!" mocked Nina Wilson.

"Simple as a baby!" lisped De Camp.

The animated crowd at the entrance divided, making way for a pair of new arrivals—a young lady of lissome and statuesque figure, and an alert, handsome, dark-haired gentleman whose breast showed the crimson ribbon of the Legion of Honor. For a moment or two they paused in converse; then the man disappeared in the crowd and the lady advanced alone, smiling and nodding towards sundry acquaintances as she passed. She wore a gown of creamy color and glossy material. A girdle of pearls flashed on her slender waist and a single string of diamonds encircled her shapely neck.

"I'll cut her dead," brusquely declared Miss Harrington.

"I certainly shall not recognize her," announced Miss Wilson in peacock notes that all might hear who chose to; "it's certainly about time to draw the line."

Hearing this stern feminine judgment, decision, sentence, Mrs. Naughton felt amazed, disgusted, ashamed of her sex.

"Why, girls," she said reproachfully, "this is terribly cruel. Surely you wouldn't put such a mean insult on the poor creature in public—she looks as gentle as a lamb."

Then as the newcomer drew near, her face beaming with pleasant recognition and expectancy, Nance Naughton experienced a sudden, fearful sensation that caused the lights to dance before her eyes, her unnerved hands to drop her fan, her staunch, true heart almost to stop its beating.

The newcomer—the scorned of the stinging wasps of society—was her daughter, Nell!

ANNIE MACK BERLEIN.

CHAPTER XVI.

"MY SON-IN-LAW, THE COUNT."

A SUDDEN feeling of faintness clutched at the strong heart of Nance Naughton, a crushing sense of shame and humiliation took possession of her as she caught sight of the face and form of her daughter in the throng and dizzily endeavored to realize the terrible import of the expressions of the society people around her. The bitterest chalice of life was at her lips. At its poignant taste lights, faces, diamonds, flowers danced away into a hideous pandemonium, and instead came the foul spectre of Sin, surrounded by the poisonous breath and the black flapping wings of demons.

For a moment the scene swam tremulously before her; then, resolutely crushing back her feelings she rose totteringly to her feet. Robert Bronson, who was passing, paused and approached her, startled by the deathlike pallor of her face.

"My dear woman, you are ill," he said, gently taking her by the arm. "It is the air, or rather lack of air. Too sultry and stuffy here tonight. Come, let me assist you to the balcony."

But Nance unconsciously seized his arm with an iron grip that made him wince.

"It is the girl!" she hoarsely whispered. "My God, me girl, me little girl Nell—the woman, the woman of

the town, the woman these people are talking hellish evil about!''

''Surely—surely you are mistaken,'' faltered Bronson.

''Mistaken—no, no, to me grief and sorrow—I wish to God I was! I'd know her in a moment among ten thousand. Me child, me poor lost child!''

''You must not meet her or recognize her in any way,'' said Bronson decisively, his sense of Puritan respectability promptly on the alert.

''Not meet her? And why not?'' panted Nance, her maternal instincts aroused and bellicose.

''Because for your own sake you must not. If what those people say be true, there is a broad, deep gulf between you and her. Best ignore her and forget her. Recognize her and they will link your name with hers and you will ruin yourself forever in society.''

''Society!'' With an impatient movement she flung off his restraining and supporting arm. ''Society, indeed! These chattering jackdaws, these dirty buzzards! Who cares? She is me child. I will speak to her in spite of all this gilded scum. If she were in hell I would wade through its fire to pull her out.''

''What's the matter, oh, what is it, my dear Mrs. Naughton?'' timidly inquired Maud Bronson, noting the white face and agitated manner of the widow. ''Why, father, what has happened? What is the cause of her excitement?''

For Nance Naughton, as her daughter Nell emerged from the press, stepped forward with outstretched hands and greeted her.

''Ah, me darlin','' she said, loud enough for dozens around to hear, ''so you've come at last. And how are

AT THE RECEPTION IN THE PALACE HOTEL AT SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

you this evenin'? You look charming, charming! And this is the dress I sent you from Paris—it suits you as the color suits the rose. And these diamonds, too—I picked out good ones for you, didn't I? They sparkle on your white neck like dew on the sweet whitethorn in old Ireland."

Taking her daughter by the hand she led her around the circle of society acquaintances as she had formed them, especially singling out those who had been most scathing in Phariseean indignation and virulent innuendo, and introduced her with courtly and impressive grace, meanwhile noting with interest and satisfaction the altered demeanor of the late cynics and censors.

"Allow me to present my only daughter, Miss Helen Naughton, the true owner of the great Old Thunder mine, which she inherited from her father."

A buzz went around. So this, then, was the secret of the fine establishments, of the magnificent dresses and the jewels and the automobiles?

There was a thrill, a stir, a movement as at a trumpet blast calling the worshipers of the golden calf to their idolatry. It was the ready payment of the world's homage to wealth, the awed and subduing sensation of being in the mighty presence of a gold mine.

"Ah, really, this is a delicious mystery!" said Miss Harrington, all smiles and graciousness. "Why, of course, we all know our dear Miss Naughton. But oh, how naughty not to have let us know of your great good fortune."

"Oh, thou favored of the gods!" exclaimed De Camp. "So all this time we have been entertaining an American princess unawares."

"Entertaining, forsooth!" muttered Newburry, "entertaining with tomahawks and poisoned arrows."

"Ah, I see how it is," chirped Miss Wilson, her lofty reserve vanished, her indignation effaced; "Miss Naughton preferred to be known not for affluence but art."

"Well, I suppose you are satisfied now as to Miss Naughton's social calibre," remarked Newburry, as the widow and her daughter moved away. "The touchstone has been applied and the metal has proved genuine."

"What blind ninnies we have been, to be sure!" growled De Camp, mentally squirming over lost opportunities yet revolving in his mind a fortune hunter's scheme of approach and achievement.

"What has specially struck me with astonishment and disgust tonight," said Miss Wilson severely, "is the nauseous odor that emanates from evil hearts and poisonous tongues. Now, if there is anything above all others that I utterly detest and despise, it is the vicious habit of backbiting, of calumny."

Newburry stared at the speaker in amused surprise. He laughed—he could not help it.

"Ay, laugh as you will, Mr. Newburry," continued the fair moralist; "indulge your saturnine cynicism to the top of your unhappy bent when the character of a virtuous girl is at stake."

"Oh, come, Miss Wilson, I protest," exclaimed the pilloried one in amazement; "be good enough to remember that I had no part in your anvil chorus."

"Your protestations come with rather tardy and reluctant grace," declared the damsel who had executed the surprising *volte face*. "And as for Mr. De Camp"—

and the face of that thunderstruck gentleman became scarlet—"he ought to be supremely ashamed of his mean and unmanly and cowardly remarks, and, upon my word, he deserves a sound horsewhipping, and if I were a man I'd be glad to give it to him."

"Oh, say, Miss Wilson, you are going entirely too far," spluttered De Camp. "Why, it was you yourself who"——

"Don't you dare hurl any recriminations at me, sir," commanded the censor, with imposing show of outraged dignity and rectitude; "they come badly from a chronic calumniator. Ah, truly did the sage Bard of Avon—or was it really Bacon?—say:

> " 'Tis calumny, my brother, calumny,
> Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose sting
> Outvenoms all the worms of the Nile."

"And, too, never till tonight did I realize the dreadful extent of woman's inhumanity to woman."

"In your own person," glossed Miss Harrington, with an indignant toss of her head. "What little pot is this that so suddenly calls all the kettles black?"

"This little pot is boiling over with virtuous scorn," loftily continued Miss Wilson. "To adopt forcible language at the risk of being considered vulgar I must say, my dear Miss Harrington, that you are a 'knocker' with a Nasmyth hammer."

"Well, of all the brazen and impudent things!" gasped Miss Harrington.

"Did you ever in all your life!" feebly ejaculated De Camp.

"The mining widow and her daughter have certainly

afforded us some surprise and sensation," laughed Newburry.

But they were on the eve of further surprise and sensation.

Meanwhile Nance Naughton had signaled her daughter to follow her, and like a stately battleship followed by a graceful pleasure yacht the pair traversed the throng until they reached a lighted alcove where the drawn portieres lent them privacy. There with set face and stern and searching eyes the mother turned upon the daughter.

"For a long, long time I have been lookin' for you, Nell. And now is it this way we meet—heavens above, is it this way we meet?"

"What do you mean, mother?"

Since the strange meeting and the stranger salutation and words of her mother the girl had been in a trance of joy and bewilderment.

"It is so fortunate we have met, mother," continued Nell. "I wondered at your strange long silence. I wrote you often and often, but no word came back, and I thought you would not forgive me for going away. Then I heard that you had struck gold, that the vein had been discovered at last, and I could not write any more for fear that you would think that I was merely selfish, that I wanted my share in the mine."

"And did that drive you to shame?"

"Shame?"

"I strove and prayed to find you and now that I have found you—oh, the black and bitter disgrace of it all!—me ears are burnin' off me head with the stories of your doin's, with the sneers and sayin's of that crowd outside, that fashionable rabble."

"Oh, now I understand," said Nell, with a gesture of impatience and annoyance. "You heard some whispers about the count. Pshaw, never mind them, mother."

"But I do mind them, girl, I do mind them, and you can't fool me."

Towering to her full height, with flashing eyes and extended accusing finger, Nance looked like a female Virginius, rather like a relentless Irish pagan woman in pre-patrician days whose erring daughter was condemned to the stake and her ashes to the "three shovelfuls of disgrace."

"Those clothes, those jewels—couldn't you have lived without them and kept honest and pure, as I trained you to? Tear off that silk, it speaks of degradation. You have diamonds on your neck; take them off, there's a curse in every one of them. Come with me, my child, my own girl, anywhere, anywhere, away from here."

By turns she was commanding, pleading, threatening, beseeching. The girl, with her eyes cast down, stood confused and blushing beneath the storm of threat and entreaty.

"Yes, I heard about your count, too, the villain," fiercely hissed the excited woman. "Oh, before I leave this hated and accursed place I wish I could have the pleasure of killin' him!"

"Mother, you wrong me. Shame on yourself, shame, to think and speak so of your daughter."

The lightning glance of the Widow Naughton was met by one quite as fiery, fearless and defiant. It was like the flashing crossing of rapiers in the hands of bold and determined combatants, the odds being equal and the cause vital and supreme.

"Yes, again I say, mother, you wrong me, and you wrong the man who has done me the honor of making me his wife."

At which the wrath of Nance turned of a sudden into stark astonishment, as she endeavored to grasp the full significance of the statement.

"Made you his wife. What, Nell, avourneen, you a married woman, and me, your mother, not to know a thing about it! Oh, this is strange, this is quare," she commented dubiously. "Nell, Nell, my girl, you are not lyin' to me?"

"No, as heaven is above us, no, mother. What I tell you is true. We were married by a priest. I am the true and wedded wife of a good and worthy man."

For some moments Nance was dumb in surprise and speculation. She felt immensely relieved, gratified; a great load was lifted off her mind, a dread responsibility seemed lightly brushed aside as by the wings of benignant guardian angels, the blood coursed jubilantly in her veins, her heart no longer beating in shame and sorrow but in joy and exultation.

One lurking feeling of doubt and uncertainty remained: she did not like those furtive, secret marriages. Matrimony, to her healthy Catholic mind, was not a hole-and-corner function but a grand and sacred sacrament for all the world to see and witness, the free and open union of a happy couple dowered with the grace of God.

"And your husband, Nell, who is he?—for goodness' sake, tell me quick, and all about him—who is he, avourneen?"

A smile flickered on the winsome face of Nell, a smile that meant many things—wifely pride, joy of marriage,

anticipation of stunning surprise occasioning piquant amusement.

"Mother, I am the wife of the gentleman—the—the nobleman you have heard mentioned, and by foolish people who didn't know what they were talking about."

"What, the count!"

"The count, mother. When you see me"——

"Yes, asthore machree?"

"You see the Countess de Vaudray."

Tenderly and affectionately Nance kissed her daughter. A tear glistened on her cheek. "God bless and prosper ye, avourneen," she said. "Sure, no matter what title you have or what fine quality you mix with, you'll always be the same to me."

Then, overcome with strange emotion, she sat down and thought, her firm chin supported on her shapely arms and her gaze resting with pensive far-away look on her daughter, as if she were deliberately reading and studying her future, while Nell sat silently opposite her, nervously playing with her fan and wondering what might be the nature and outcome of her meditations.

A countess? Many an ambitious American papa and mamma, plutocrats by inheritance or aspiring members of the *nouveau riche,* would have gladly coveted and welcomed such alien social distinction for their daughter. Many a damsel born unto affluence and dazzled by the vision of coronet and plume and court presentation would have coaxed and nagged her fond parents into purchasing for her a foreign title, encumbered though it might be with the usual accompaniment of an impecunious bad man, broken and dissolute, who would be sure to make trouble for her later on, after the manner of his miser-

able kind. Nance Naughton had heard and read of many such cases. The victims passed before her in dreary panorama. She saw young American women, slighted and neglected by titled scoundrels who had squandered their fortunes, pining in the solitude of the palatial mansions their money had rescued from decay, sad as Mariana in the moated grange. Others, though sparkling and scintillating in jewels beyond price, scoffed and sneered at as "dumped Americans." Others ridding themselves of their bonds through the obliging medium of the divorce court, only to plunge again into the unhallowed lottery, changing husbands as they changed their millinery. Others, the decenter kind, who, disillusioned and dismayed, sought shelter in their parents' homes, to eke out their days in genteel grass widowhood.

And Nell was married to a count, and, most perilous matrimonial experiment, a French count at that!

"Well, Nell, darlin'," said Nance slowly and optimistically, "it may be all for the best and I wish you joy and happiness of your choice. A count is a man anyhow, or ought to be, and if you take after your mother you'll make a good one out of him. But there's one thing about all this that I don't either understand or like. Why doesn't this high-up husband of yours introduce you to these birds of fine feather as his wife? Why are ye makin' such a secret of it? Is it, me girl, that he's ashamed of you?"

Nell laughed blithely. "Ashamed of me—oh, no, mother, on the contrary, he is very proud of me; he is true, loyal, devoted. But there were reasons that made the concealment of our marriage for a time at least a matter of prudence and necessity. For various reasons

he wishes it kept secret until he returns to France to take possession of his title and estates."

"And why wait, acushla?"

"Because he fears that other claimants may make trouble for him and cause him to lose all."

Nance shook her head. "In troth a thin and sickly reason and one I don't at all admire. I'll bet Old Thunder would more than cover all your cautious count's estates, with a dozen ould French castles thrown in. Isn't your good name worth more than all his castles and all his wealth? Bah, this is enough to make your honest father turn in his grave. This sneakin' shillyshallyin' don't go. No, Nell, I have enough for all of us, even if his wealth and estates went to the dickens. Your husband, your count must own you as his wife here, now, tonight, or I'll have a better reason why."

Countess Nell rose impulsively. "Come, mother, let's go to him and see about it."

But now, somewhat mollified and reassured, Nance hesitated and held back, in rather grotesque timidity and indecision.

"Wait—wait a minute, avourneen. Is it me to go red raw and sass a high muckymuck like that? Arrah, child, 'tis little I know of counts and their ways. Best go yourself, darlin', and tell him what I want done, and tell him what I say goes. I may break him in as a son-in-law by and by, but just at present I don't think I'd feel quite at home in his company."

Her daughter laughed merrily at her hesitancy and partial confusion.

"Dear me, mother, are you really going to show the white feather? Are you afraid of a poor little gentle,

harmless count? Come with me—I'll guarantee you'll soon find yourself quite at home in his company."

Nance viewed herself hurriedly in a wall mirror, adjusted the diamond necklet on her neck, patted the lace on her expansive bosom and fanned herself with assumption of elegant hauteur.

"Me afeard?—not a bit of it, me girl, not of count or duke or earl, for to none of them do I take a back seat, rememberin' that our ancestors were kings in Ireland. Come on then, I'm with you; trot out his high mightiness."

The portieres of the alcove were gently thrust aside and a gentleman appeared—a spruce, handsome gentleman with jet black hair, mustache and imperial, with a crimson ribbon across his shirt front.

"Ah, pardonnez moi," he said. "Nell, I have been everywhere looking for you."

"What in thunder—Frenchy!" Nance stared fascinatedly at the newcomer.

"Mother, my husband, Francis, Count de Vaudray."

"By the powers!" was all the widow could ejaculate, but presently her countenance assumed a firm and determined expression.

"Oui, madame, oui, it is I, Francis, your old Francis," said the former chef of the mining camp, bowing and smiling; "still Francis to my dear friends but to the rest of the world the Count de Vaudray."

She regarded him steadily and searchingly. "Very glad indeed I am to meet you, Francis," she said, rather reservedly and reproachfully. "And so you are a count, Francis, and you have married me daughter, Francis, and for your own ends you're keepin' it a sacret, Francis,

and lettin' the world drag her name in the mire of slander."

The count flushed and started as if struck. "I!—no, madame I will defend her honor with my heart's blood. I only wish to wait awhile, to wait until my estates are settled."

Nance waved her strong, plump arm as if she would sweep the excuse into chaos.

"What do I care, count, for your foreign estates, as long as the happiness and reputation of me daughter is at stake? A sad mistake has been made, but I'll soon remedy it. Come with me, me children."

She took each by an arm and marched out into the crowded assembly room. Their impressive movement down the center attracted general attention and comment.

"Looks as if the rich widow from the mining country actually intends to capture the count for her daughter," said one.

"See the clutch she has on his arm," said another. "Poor fellow, he looks as if he would like to make his getaway, but she has a dead sure cinch on him."

Nance, as she went, bowed courteous salutations right and left. She swept along, stately of mien, graceful of movement, her face radiant as with the glow of a great victory.

It was the triumphal march of the Woman of the West.

Near a central pillar where the gay throng was thickest still lounged on ottomans that choice quartette of social censors, the Misses Harrington and Wilson, the Messrs. De Camp and Newburry. There also lingered Robert Bronson and his daughter Maud. There young

Tim Naughton and his yellow satellite Ching had found coign of vantage for acute observation accompanied by liberal and incisive comment. There, in the splendor of his green and glittering livery, loitered Joe, the colored factotum and page, waiting on the will of his mistress. And there, having somehow obtained admission to that to them curious maelstrom and demonstration of polite society in all its works and pomps, were those two staunch and sturdy miners from Old Thunder, namely: Bill Hinckley and Jack Dacey, who were slowly gleaning their first impression of swelldom, to-wit: that the great enjoyment of high society was to walk about in fine clothes and chatter incessantly and sip of an iced beverage for some mysterious reason called punch.

It was in this vortex of the social function that the Widow Naughton halted with her companions as if on parade and flashed around a glance inviting attention.

"What funny things happen all in one life and sometimes all in one night!" she said, addressing nobody in particular but taking in all. "One can never tell what is goin' to happen, particularly in high society. Now, I think, ladies and gentlemen, this is as good a time as any to reveal to you all a nice little romance with a French bouquet to it, a love affair as pretty and sweet as a Marechal Niel rose. There are times, you know, when it is well and wise to keep some things secret; there are other times when it ain't, and this is one of them.

"A little while ago I introduced this young lady here as my daughter, Miss Helen Naughton, heiress of the Old Thunder mine. Well, that, as it happens, was only a bit of a joke—sure we must all have our fun one way or another. She is me daughter and the heiress of the

Old Thunder mine all right, but she is not Nell Naughton any more. I have the honor of presenting the Countess de Vaudray."

And as the winsome young countess, blushing, smiled and bowed, Nance laid her hand with maternal pride and proprietorship on the shoulder of the dapper little raven haired nobleman beside her.

"Ladies and gentlemen, my son-in-law, the count."

THE LAND OF PROMISE

THE LAND OF PROMISE

ONG, long ago there lived in the land of Egypt a people bowed down by the cruelty and tyranny of the Pharaohs; a nation stung almost unto death by the biting scourge of the task-master's lash; a nation crying out that the Lord had forsaken them; but when all seemed darkest for the children of Israel, when their very babes were being cast into the Nile by the tyrants, when grief and sorrow hung about every fireside, there arose among them a providential man who promised them deliverance from their captivity. And so, against all opposition, he led the chosen people out from the land of bondage across the desert sands into Canaan, the Land of Promise. And the Israelites found it to be a land flowing with milk and honey, and so long as they feared the Lord and did His will, there reigned in their midst joy and love and peace and plenty.

It seems that history repeats itself, for when we look back only 400 years ago, we behold the people of Europe shackled by a thraldom like unto that of Israel. We behold them on all sides oppressed and cowed by cruel and heartless tyrants; we behold them ignorant and sadly superstitious; we find them warring and hating one another; we behold them starving and their little children crying for bread; we behold science, instead of searching new means whereby to feed the little ones, seeking to turn worthless lead into shining gold.

Again mankind seems forsaken, but the Almighty Father is not unmindful of His children, for He again raises up a great deliverer, Christopher Columbus, the second Moses. This mighty man tells the people that the world is round and that by sailing westward he can reach the Indies and all those rich lands of the rising sun, and thereby establish a trade that will bring back gold to Europe so that the starving may be fed and that education and religion may work out unhampered the salvation and perfection of man. After years of weary wandering for means to carry out his plans, he is finally given aid, and with a tiny fleet he tempts the angry billows and all the hideous monsters that lurk beneath the dark waters of the Atlantic. For weeks and weeks, as they sailed out farther and farther to what seemed their doom, the anxious men and their brave admiral watched unceasingly for a sight of land, but they saw only the great waste of water before them and heard only the roar of the waters and the weird shrieks of the hungry birds. But finally their long vigil was at an end, for their little vessels lay anchored before a coast enriched by all the beauty that nature could bestow and peopled by a strange race of copper-colored men.

It was not the Indies he had discovered; he brought back no rich spices or shining gold, but he had done the greatest deed that history can record, the like of which no other man can ever do again; he had given to mankind a new world; he is truly the second Moses, for he led the way out of the land of bondage into the new land of promise and opportunity, Columbia, or, as it has been wrongfully and ungratefully called, America. But

though it has been named for another, yet the glory of the modern Moses can never be diminished. And when the names of those who have won fame by their fellow-men's blood will be no longer honored, Christopher Columbus will still stand out as the greatest man ever born of woman.

When the news was spread of the wonderful land across the sea other daring sailors started out to try their fortunes in the new land, and so colonies of many nations were soon founded in the new world. What a thrill of joy it must have sent coursing through the oppressed of the old world to think how they could escape the tyranny of their native lands and live in liberty and happiness across the waters in the virgin forests of America!

But all was not so easy. The great nation that we are so proud of today was built by the pluck and undying self-sacrifice of the noblest men that ever walked the earth. They braved the dangers of the deep and the dangers of the forest; they cared not for the torrid sun or freezing cold, for they fled from the oppression of the old world and came to the land of promise that they might find here liberty and a chance to be and do something in the race of life. To them hardships and privations were but as stepping-stones to final success. And so when the great mistress of the seas began to crush out the liberties of the little American colonies, every patriot seized his flintlock and in the grandest war that man has ever fought for right and justice, wrung from their unnatural mother their liberty and their freedom, and so established the grandest government the world has ever

known—the government of the people and for the people and by the people. Thus was the work of the modern Moses consummated by George Washington, the father of our country, and the noble band of our forefathers, who fought, yea, even died that they might give us the priceless gift of liberty. Liberty is the keynote of our government; not lawless liberty that only breeds anarchy and ruin, but the liberty which America grants as the birthright to all her honest and law-abiding citizens. Liberty to think as one would, liberty to say and do according to one's own will, and, greatest of all, liberty to worship God as we will—these are the glorious privileges that all enjoy in the new land of promise.

For centuries men were tortured by their fellowmen for their beliefs; one Christian burnt another in order to glorify God, but here in this land of freedom we may worship God in the synagogue, the meeting house or in the cathedral. But even after this government had been founded on the principle that all men are free and equal, there still remained slavery as a black hand laid heavily on the land; but again there appeared a man equal to the task, and Abraham Lincoln, the saviour of his country, abolished human thraldom. Thus could Liberty cry out: "I have at last found a home across the waters in the modern Canaan, America." Thus have three of the noblest men that the world has ever known strived to make Columbia the home of liberty and rightful freedom. What a glorious trio—Christopher Columbus, the discoverer; George Washington, the father; and Abraham Lincoln, the saviour!

Oh! that I were endowed with some omnipotent power

so that I might ascend the loftiest summit of the Rockies and pick a thorn sprig from old Erin, a palm branch from darkest Africa, an olive twig from sunny Italy, and a lichen from the steppes of Russia, and weaving them all into three wreaths of surpassing beauty, from my lofty peak crown these three immortals amidst the shouting of the down-trodden of all lands. For one people alone do not honor them, but wherever men long for human liberty, there their names are household words.

The oppressed of all nations seek refuge and find succor under the stars and stripes. They come from their native lands, queer and strange to us, but soon we forget that they are anything but Americans, for they claim no other home than America.

Some say we should restrict immigration; in other words we should prevent sturdy, liberty-loving sons of other lands from finding shelter here and becoming good American citizens. But you may say it is the undesirable element that we wish to keep out. And so it is, but because a man cannot read or write or has not so much money in his pockets, should that be any reason why we should prohibit him entering our fair land? No. The only ones whom we should prevent entering are criminals, lunatics, invalids and paupers, for since America is a land of opportunities, where every man must hustle for himself, it is not right for us to take the burden of caring for other nations' disabled citizens. We have enough to do to look after our own.

But we should establish at all our principal ports institutions where foreigners could be taught to read, speak and write our language; where they could be taught

some useful trade and thus go forth equipped to live in this great land of promise, where all men are equal and all have an equal chance. This would also eliminate that class that is not willing to pay the price for so great a gift as American citizenship.

Yes, we should welcome the sons of other lands driven from their native heath by tyranny and oppression, for every one that becomes a citizen of this great republic is a loss to some nation and an inestimable gain to us. Our goddess of liberty in New York harbor sheds forth her beacon-light, not merely upon the surrounding bay, but the rays from her inextinguishable torch penetrate the inmost recesses of every land, bringing joy and hope to mankind everywhere.

But going back to the children of Israel, we find that they soon forgot God and allowed earthly attachments to supersede their duty, and as Jehovah had promised to remain with them only so long as they were faithful to Him, He forsook them and they were led into captivity; and their nation being destroyed, they are still wanderers over the earth.

Will such a fate ever befall this new land of promise? Unless there is a change for the better in our national life, a terrible calamity is inevitable.

The great crime of our nation is money-madness. Men are selling their very souls for gold. Our congress and our legislatures are tainted by the scourge. A few men are amassing vast fortunes at the expense of the lives of the little children who toil in their mills and mines. Quacks do not hesitate to impose dangerous cereals on the over-credulous sick. Men in places of public trust

are setting aside their honor and robbing the people whom they represent. And so this awful race after wealth is going on, growing worse every day.

If this mad race for gold continues, if our children are allowed to work their young lives away to furnish the rich with luxury and the glory of founding libraries and colleges, if our politics are not purified, but greatest of all, if we do not establish the sanctity of the home, the foundation of society and the inviolability of the marriage bond—that is, abolish divorce, the terrible octopus which has us in its throes—America will surely share the fate that befell Israel, and the star spangled banner will no longer "wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave."

But no, this cannot be. We have an example before us which stands out as a beacon-light warning us of the rocks and shoals that lay in our course, and heeding our impending danger, the sons of this modern patriotism, which demands not that we die for our beloved land but that we live for her, are coming to the front, and with their vote, that precious weapon of liberty, will fight the battle of right against the foes of this new land of promise. Now that the battle has already begun, we may confidently cry out with the poet:

"Thou too, sail on, O ship of state!
Sail on O union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast and sail and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,

In what a forge and what a heat,
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee—are all with thee!''

THE DAWN OF PEACE

THE DAWN OF PEACE

VEN if the prophet Isaiah had never sung of the day of universal peace, when men shall beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, the triumphs of this present age over old customs and superstitions would surely foretell the extermination of warfare and the substitution of right and justice. For before the onward march of this new civilization, which has given us the "Doctrine of the Divine Right of the People," and has taught us the Brotherhood of Man in the Fatherhood of God, such an outworn and bloody system as militarism cannot live.

Long, long ago two men came to hate each other; and as the hatred grew they began to fight with their fists and feet, and as the hatred deepened and widened as an ulcer, they fought more fiercely than ever in groups and under leaders with clubs and stones, and finally with slings, battle-axes and swords. Watch-words, battle-cries, uniforms, standards, and soul-inspiring martial music, everything that man's ingenuity and wickedness could devise, was invented to mask the hideousness of war and to make men fight more like demons. But even this was not all. Science, instead of creating ways and means for the uplifting and betterment of mankind, has given birth to all sorts of instruments of destruction and death. People became so blinded to the horrors and

crimes of war that it was considered the most glorious of callings, the path to honor and fame; mothers taught their sons that fighting was the noblest occupation for manly men; they nursed their babes at the breast of aggression and revenge and took only warriors as husbands for their daughters.

We may admit that the experiences of war have equipped the men of the present with pluck and energy, but if we demand the same expression of them today we would be as foolish as if were we to expect the full-grown man to show his powers as he did in the schoolyard fights of his boyhood. Although the history of war is the history of man, although the pages of its story are sprinkled with tales of noblest heroism and undying valor, yet this glorious present has traveled out of its reach into a new land of promise and desires. For we have come to realize that war is a violation of that law given to Moses on Sinai's Mount amidst thunder and lightning: "Thou shalt not kill."

Although we abandon war as we have all other dead customs and superstitions of the past, yet we must retain that which has been good and noble in the spirit of warfare; let us infuse it into our national life, for surely there are greater battles and mightier foes to fight than ever confronted the great Julius. Men of today are bound together into a mighty host by stronger ties than ever united the little Corsican and his soldiers; they are the bonds of humanity and the spirit of love taught by the Christ. This vast army is not amassed for conquest or for the attainment of personal ambitions at the expense of untold suffering and misery. It is engaged in a powerful crusade against despotism, graft, disease

and crime, and it is this mighty host that will ultimately banish war from the earth, for with the benefits of education, the people are realizing that as long as militarism rules, every man as he leaves his home for his work each day, whether it be for the plough, the office, the shop or the store, carries with him a lazy, idle soldier.

Although for centuries the wickedness of warfare has been taught from the pulpit and the rostrum, men still consent to sacrifice their lives on fields of shame and horror, without seeking a better method of settling disputes. With the light of the twentieth century, we are coming to realize that war is but a blot of the past which must be eradicated and justice maintained in its place. As we have outgrown the accursed "wager of battle" in deciding men's guilt or innocence, so will we outgrow the belief that differences between nations can rightly be settled by force of arms.

Through all the ages the noblest and grandest instincts of man have been sacrificed, the toilers of all lands have been robbed and ravaged and oppressed, all to feed the passions of the war-god. Differences, both small and great, are submitted to the blind and senseless arbitration of the sword; might has become right and justice between peoples wanders outcast and homeless. And so this relic of barbarism has come down to us until today, black as death and red as hell, it stands as gruesome as ever. Gladstone once said: "The greatest tyranny of our age is militarism." None will doubt the truth of this after taking a view of the earth today. Year after year the armies grow and the fleets expand. In this mad race of death, each nation, goaded on by fear and hatred, seems determined to outstrip the others, even

at the expense of plunging headlong into the pit of exhaustion and ruin.

Millions of soldiers under arms, almost every harbor swept by terrible engines of death, thousands of warships prowling about the seas, national coffers drained, the people bowed down under the burden of it all, thus can we glance at the lamentable and terrible situation of the world today. And what is being done to stamp out this awful scourge? Are the people standing by, fickle as a Roman mob, watching it all? No, there is a great awakening. The demand is echoing from land to land that law and justice be established between nations as well as between individuals.

If you seek the story of this great movement, go back to a cold December night, in the Judean hills, nineteen hundred years ago, and there behold a band of shepherds, keeping the night watches over their flocks, when suddenly there appears a vast multitude of the heavenly host, singing out upon the chilly midnight air that song which has echoed from mountain top to mountain top in every land and clime: "Glory be to God in the highest and on earth peace, good-will to men." Thus was the first Christmas canticle sung by the heavenly choir to announce the birth of the "Prince of Peace," of Him who sent His disciples forth to teach all men His doctrine of love, of Him who commanded: "Put up the sword, for they that live by the sword shall also perish by the sword." His mission has not been in vain, for through all the years of persecution and warfare His teachings have come down to us, and although the great curse of war is not yet wiped out, Christianity in all ages has been the leaven that is slowly transforming men from

mere brutes into noble souls striving after right and truth.

Two infant nations have taken the lead in the peace ranks. Chile and Argentina have sold their warships, disbanded their armies and, after erecting on the loftiest summit of the Andes a magnificent statue of the "Prince of Peace," have sworn that sooner shall these awful peaks crumble into dust than Chile and Argentina forget their brotherhood and draw the sword on one another. This seems a fulfillment of the prophecy: "And a little child shall lead them."

The words of Immanuel Kant, spoken over five-score years ago, seem now on the verge of realization: "For states in their relation to one another, there cannot be, according to reason, any other way out of the lawless conditions which inevitably result in war, than that they give up their lawless freedom just as individual men do according to public constraining laws, and so form an international state which will grow and ultimately embrace all the peoples of the earth."

This spirit of brotherly love is waxing stronger every day; national boundaries and barriers fall down before this new humanity. Men of one nation no longer hate their fellowmen because they live in a different clime or speak a different tongue. All are coming to see that the Creator placed us here to live in peace and harmony, each one living not solely for himself, but also for the good of his neighbor, who, as Christ said, is "every man."

It is this spirit of neighborly, brotherly love, that will bring about the union of all peoples, and forever banish slavery and tyranny and war from the face of the earth.

For when men realize that all are brothers, when they realize that it is for the common good of all, they will gladly lay down their arms and work in a united host for the destruction of evil and the advancement of good.

More has been done towards the creation of a world-state than most people realize. Just as the nineteenth century was closing, the Czar Nicholas called the first peace congress of the principal nations of the world to meet at The Hague. The result of this meeting was the creation of an international court of arbitration for the settlement of disputes among the nations. This was the first step taken that will forever hang the sword and the rifle upon the wall to rust and crumble into nothingness. In the little kingdom of Holland a grand "Temple of Peace" will soon be erected as a home for the court, and even more than this is the fact that already the Pius fund case between the United States and Mexico, the famous Venezuelan case, and a few others have been referred to this court, and amicably settled without the shedding of a drop of human blood, without a groan either from the dying soldier on the battlefield or the toiler at his work, without a widow's, an orphan's or a sweetheart's tear for the one that would never return. Thus soon will the song of the psalmist be realized: "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder, He burneth the chariot in the fire."

When such is the condition of good-fellowship, war will become a mere relic and curse of the past along with cannibalism and slavery. Then will the poet's dream be realized:

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw a vision of the world and all the wonder that would be,
When the war drum throbbed no longer and the battle flags
were furled,
In the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

Then "will men beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks;" then will the Krupp factory no longer make its deadly weapons of death and destruction, but on the contrary build mighty engines to lessen human labor and to reap a more abundant harvest so that the children of the poor may be abundantly fed; then will men look upon a cannon in a museum with the same curiosity as we do upon an instrument of torture. No longer will Caesars, Alexanders or Napoleons lead forth vast hosts to conquer and to slay, merely to gratify the cravings of passion and ambition; no longer will such men as Washington or Grant regret to fight and long for the day of universal peace. For then will the "Prince of Peace" have conquered and to the uttermost parts of the earth will be echoed the angels' song: "Peace on earth, good-will toward men."

WHAT IS YOUR HAVEN?

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MY dear friends: I desire to have a heart-to-heart talk with you on a subject that should interest everyone in this large audience. Tennyson said:

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies—
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower; but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

Friends, many have been the attempts made to find out what life is. But life cannot be weighed or measured; it cannot be seen. No knife is keen enough to lay it bare, no grappling hook strong enough to grasp it; iron bars and stone walls do not confine it; no microscope is fine enough to expose it—life defies detection. It never has and probably never will be caught and brought to view. It is as great a mystery today as when Adam, looking out through the dawn in Eden, wondered what it was all about.

Nevertheless, many attempts have been made to define life; but they have all failed as fail they must, for, my friends, how can one define the unknown. I go to my dictionary, and it replies: "Life is animated existence." I ask the scientists, those who call themselves biologists, and Herbert Spencer, their foremost representative, gives his illuminating answer: "Life is

a definite combination of heterogeneous changes, simultaneous and successive, in correspondence with external co-existences and sequences." Perhaps he knows what that means, I do not. Another wise man says: "Life is the sum of those forces which tend to resist death." This has an easy matter-of-fact air, and sounds as plausible as the assertion that two and two make four. But after all it does not tell what life is; it only tells what life does. Besides, if the resistance of death constitutes life, we should know what death is. Another says: "Life is the force which keeps the organism in correspondence with its environments." Friends, this has the advantage of high-sounding terms from foreign tongues, but again tells only what life does and in no sense what life is. Shakespeare compared life to a drama:

> "Out, out brief candle,
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more."

I come now to Fitz James Stephen, and I urge him to give his view of life. He promptly answers: "We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, though we get a glimpse now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we shall be frozen to death; if we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know whether there is any right one. What must we do? Act for the best, hope for the best, and take what comes. If death ends all we cannot meet death better." Friends, such a philosophy of life is a sunless day and a starless night. Are we ready to accept it? Ah, my friends,

science and philosophy have failed to discover or define what life really is.

Suppose we turn from them to the street, and ask at haphazard the first half-dozen men or women we meet. "Life? Why life is having a good time," says the club man. To him Browning makes answer:

> "Poor vaunt of life indeed,
> Were man but formed to feed
> On joy, to solely seek and find and feast,
> Such feasting ended then
> As sure an end to man."

"Life? Oh, life is making money," says another, who is not mindful of the Master's words: "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Yes, the world's philosophy of life is: The only purpose of living is to get and keep. That is most desirable which is most real; the most real is that which you can see, and hold and look up to. No one achieves success until he has accumulated money or has won the honors and emoluments of high office. He lives the largest life who has most money or most honors. To die in obscurity is failure. Friends, there is a nobler programme for a life. The real purpose of life is to dwell upon the higher levels. The best within us is developed by touching the invisible. No man is normal until he has crucified himself. It is possible to live a large life in a small place. He lives the largest life, irrespective of his surroundings, who is purest, truest, and most helpful. This is Christ's programme for a life. It is based upon His ringing words: "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." It is

emphasized by that one tremendous sentence which burns its way like a shaft into the innermost recesses of thought: "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"How much was he worth?" I heard one ask concerning a man who had accumulated a million dollars and who had suddenly died. His life had been narrow and cramped; he toiled and pinched during his earlier years, and in later life he had existed for the gratification of his baser self; he lived in a splendid house; he ate the richest food; his bloated body was clothed in fine linen every day. But his ear was deaf to the cry of the poor; his eye never looked in pity upon the distressed; he never lifted a burden from a brother's back; his voice was never raised in defence of the wronged; he lived a distorted, gluttonous life; he lived for himself. "How much was he worth?" I heard one ask, and the answer was: "A million dollars." But the answer was wrong; he was worth nothing.

Jesus was the world's chief democrat. He came from the common folks. His father was a carpenter. He had enthusiasm for humanity. Every man was His brother. The democracy of Jesus—how mightily it has gripped the world. When He began to teach His doctrines of brotherhood the most august figure on earth was the emperor. He was the only figure, for he was the state and the state was all. At that time the common man was a slave. The marks of the shackles were red upon his wrists, and a great despair was in his soul. But what a change has come. At the command of Christ the shackles were knocked off, and the common man began

to rise. He has been rising ever since, and is now the most imperial figure on earth.

The philosophy of life which Jesus taught, and which rises high above all other philosophies, is based upon service and sacrifice. The world today admires the hero. But, my friends, did you ever hear of a hero who became such by doing something for himself? As I have travelled about this great republic, I have gazed upon many monuments that have been erected to the memory of large-hearted philanthropists, but I have never yet seen one erected to a miser. I have seen many monuments erected to statesmen, but never one to a mere politician. The world's honors, and the world's praises go out to those who are large enough and great enough to forget themselves in the service of their fellowmen.

Someone has called attention to the fact that only one name has come down to us prominently connected with the Crimean war. The names of those who fought in that campaign have been nearly all forgotten, but the world remembers and reveres Florence Nightingale, whose ministry of love made her immortal.

At the world's fair at St. Louis there were two boats which attracted unusual attention. The one was the little skiff in which Captain Andrews crossed the ocean; the other was the little frail boat in which Grace Darling, wrapped in the foam of the raging sea, went forth to rescue the shipwrecked sailors of The Forfarshire. One boat represents reckless daring; the other devoted courage. One represented a deed that was done for fame; the other for love of humanity. Most of the people looked with curious eye upon the boat of Captain

Andrews; the crowd gathered long and lovingly about the little boat of Grace Darling.

Friends, would you live the Christ life? Remember that you were not created to live for yourself alone; you were made to be of service to others besides yourself. Is it not significant that only once during His entire ministry did Christ use the word happiness, and then He said that people were happy if "they know His commandments and do them?" Three times only do the apostles use the word, and then to assure us that we shall be happy if we suffer with Christ. But another word was ever on the lips of our Christ—the word blessed. The poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake—these shall be blessed. And in His graphic, overwhelming panorama of the judgment day, He portrays the climax of a life modelled after His matchless philosophy in words that blaze and burn: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

Friends, what is your haven in life? Is it to be a Christ? If you refuse to follow that ideal you are turning away from the most dominating personality in history. Who, for example, is His equal in the realm of the intellect? If you call the roll of those who have most enriched the world by their creations in literature, art and music—Dante, Raphael, Angelo, Milton, Handel, with many others—you name those who borrow from Jesus the central thought of their glorious career. Coleridge declared that the richest passage in all literature was "The

Beatitudes." Charles Dickens, the world's master in pathos, said that the most touching story in literature was the story of "The Prodigal Son." Edmund Kean, artist and actor, declared that there was one scriptural passage so full of tears that no man could properly render it—that beginning with "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." And Burke insisted that the most impressive document on the rights of man was the "Sermon on the Mount." In the days of prosperity and health men have reveled in "the majestic pages of Plato or in the rhythmic beauty of Ruskin," but in the shadowy days when adversity comes or when death looks us in the face, all men exclaim: "Read me the words of Jesus; they alone speak the language of heaven."

And not only are the words of Christ the most vital in literature, but His life has been, and is, the mightiest force among men. Plato, Caesar, Alexander, Charlemagne, Napoleon—each in his day filled a large space among men, but they are gone now. Where is Christ? He has not gone. During all the centuries He has been growing larger, and His personality now fills the world.

And, my dear friends, what wonders Christ has wrought. He has built a new civilization wherever He has gone. He has glorified womanhood. He has broken the clanking chains of slavery. He has dethroned superstition. He has taught universal brotherhood. He has given to the nations just laws. He has opened wide channels of practical beneficence. He has everywhere been the harbinger of peace and good-will. As Jean Paul Richter has said: "Jesus Christ has lifted with His pierced hands empires off their fingers, has turned the stream of centuries out of its channel and governs the

ages." How dominant is Christ's personality. It was James Russell Lowell who said: "Show me ten miles square in any part of the world outside of Christianity where the life of man and the purity of woman are safe, and I will give up Christianity." Take Christ out of literature, and the library shelves will be vacant. Take Him out of art, and the walls of all the galleries will be bare. Take Him out of music, and every choir must cease to sing. Take Him out of the statute books, and our laws are a mass of illogical contradictions. Take Christ out of the world, and it is midnight—it is midnight under a starless sky.

Friends, would you make Christ your haven in life? If not, where shall you go for a revelation of God? It is worthy to note that at the time our holy Mary conceived this blessed Child the whole world was yearning for a clearer vision of God. This was true even of pagan peoples. You remember that the people of Athens, that centre of Grecian scholarship, had erected altars to many gods. But after worshipping at these altars they were unsatisfied; their deities were deaf to their cries, and answered not. So they builded another altar, and over it they placed an inscription which voiced the longing of their poor souls: "To the unknown God." For a vision of that unrevealed Deity they yearned with an inexpressible longing.

And Israel was looking for a clearer vision of God. For centuries Israel had worshipped Jehovah. But Jehovah was far away. He was great and terrible. His name was spoken with awe. His omnipotence, His omniscience, His omnipresence had been revealed. He was

the King of Kings. But the people longed to come nearer to Jehovah. They wanted to know His heart.

This great yearning was in the heart of the disciples, and one day Philip said to Christ: "Show us the Father." He did not ask to be shown the Architect whose great mind had thought out the plan of the universe; he did not ask to see the Builder whose hand had lifted world after world as though it had been a pebble, and sent it spinning through measureless space; he did not want to see the great Jehovah whose voice was thunder and whose eye was lightning. No. He said: "Show us the Father." Jesus said: "Have I been so long time with you, and dost Thou not know me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Marvelous utterance.

Christ did not come to tell the world certain abstract things about God. He came to dispel the misty, hazy, mistaken conceptions of God—a divine personality incarnated in a human life. God compressed Himself in Jesus, as it were; folded Himself together, until He lived within the scope and diameter of man's mind. Jesus thought God's thoughts. He spoke God's words. He lived God's life. He was the express image of God. He was God. "We behold the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Friends, if it could be proven that Christ was only a man; that He was never conceived by our holy virgin Mary; that He was only a link in a human chain, then however great His spiritual genius, or original His teachings, or worldwide the sweep of His moral power, Christianity were no longer divine and Christ no longer entitled to that homage the church gives to Him today.

But such a conception grates upon the feelings of the Christian's soul. That man who does not see the God in Jesus Christ has failed to grasp the significance of His place and power in the modern world. Christ has so reconstructed society and regenerated the individual that He has justified His claim that the Creator of such a religion must necessarily have created the world.

Friends, all down the ages there have been heroic souls who have believed in the divinity of Christ, and rather than surrender that faith have been burned at the stake, suffering the most excruciating pain. Friends, their faith was either in a truth or in a lie. If in a lie we are at a loss to account for the influence of such a lie exerted on the lives of those deceived by it. Christianity a lie? Then I affirm it has given rise to the most exalted characters in the history of the world. It has so transformed human nature that the very worst have become the very best, and names that were steeped in infamy it has transfigured and enhallowed with a moral splendor that time can never dim. Christianity cannot be a falsehood, for in its progress it has overthrown falsehood, crushed despotism, abolished slavery, lead the van to freedom's battles, educated ignorance, reformed vice, mitigated pains and produced the noblest characters in history. Like a mighty tidal wave, the influence of Christ has swept from secluded Nazareth to the ends of the world, defying the powers of darkness to overthrow it. Down through the centuries Christianity has come, more than a conqueror. Its influence has been felt in every moral reform, in every benevolent deed. Childhood, womanhood, manhood; science, literature, art; commerce, law, society,—all have felt the transforming,

uplifting influence of Christianity. The history of Christianity is the history of human progress; and this can be accounted for only by the fact that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh.

Have you ever grown tired of reading the story of the Trojan hero, the noblest character of the Iliad? You have followed him in imagination as he swiftly rode upon a steed to say farewell to his child before going into battle with the enemies of his country. Into the courtyard of his home he rode, a dazzling picture. The maid came out to greet him, the child in her arms; the father reached down for his child, but the little one shrank away. He knew not his father, disguised as he was in the glistening armor which protected his body; the visor which covered his face. The father was deeply grieved that the baby turned from him, but quickly seeing the reason, dropped the visor from his face. Instantly a cry of recognition came from the baby's lips, and he sprang into the soldier's arms crying: "Father, Father!"

Once humanity was afraid of God. God wore the mailed armor of a king. Upon His head was a glittering helmet, in His hand a gleaming sword. Men feared that behind the grim visor was a frowning brow, and lips which reproached them for disloyalty. The King held out His hand and said He wanted men to come to Him; but they were afraid and shrank away. The King yearned to have them come near Him, and trust and love Him. So one day He stepped from His throne, tore off His mailed armor, threw away His gleaming sword, and lifted the visor which had covered a Father's face beaming with tenderness and love. Beholding Him, humanity was afraid no more, but sprang into His extended arms

and pillowed its aching head upon His bosom. Father! that means sympathy. Father! that means undying love. Father! that means home.

Friends, are you living the Christ-life? Then you have not only a Partner who is a revelation of God but you have One who brings hope into life. Man needs hope at every period in life. See that child sleeping in the cradle. We are more interested in the cradle than in the grave. See that child as it smiles in its slumber, its little cheeks dimpled as if touched by the rosy fingers of joy. Into whose hands would you have that child go with all its wonderful possibilities of grandeur, with all its awful possibilities of woe, if not into the hands of Jesus Christ? Here is a young man and maiden—bride and bridegroom. Their hearts have come together and now they are joining hands together to be one for life. Life may bring its successes or failures; its joys or sorrows. Friends, whose banner shall wave over that home? Who shall be invited to the wedding feast if not the Christ who went to the wedding in Cana in Galilee to make that even a more joyous festival? Yonder is an old man who has come to the end of life. His arms, the defenders of his frame, are beginning to shake with age. His limbs upon which his body rests totter beneath its weight. "The grinders ceased because they are few;" that is, the teeth drop out of their sockets reminding him that very soon he will drop into the grave. "Those that look out of the windows shall be darkened;" that is, the eye, that window through which the soul looks out upon the world, becomes dim and before he passes to the great beyond "The grasshopper is a burden to him." The things lightest in weight worry and fret

and fever him. Does not this old man need hope? Friends, where can he go for this hope if not to Jesus Christ? Christ gives us a true interpretation of death and the assurance of immortality. Socrates said: "I hope I am going to good men, though this I would not positively affirm." Cicero said: "Which of these two things is truth, life or no life after death. God only knows, and which is the more probable is a great question. When I read I assent, but when I lay down the book the assent vanishes." Seneca said: "Immortality, however desirable, is rather promised than proved." With such uncertain and indefinite conceptions of immortality, no wonder death was called a monster and the grave was filled with gloom.

The Hebrews had a clearer vision. All through the old testament there are flashes of light which show that good men confidently expected to live after the dissolution of the body. But it remained for Jesus to give the unclouded vision. If He had not given that vision I would hate death. Looking on the earthly side merely, death seems to be so cruel. Is there any home represented here which he has not darkened? When you saw him coming up the steps, you shuddered. You would have barred him out, but you could not. He did not rap on the door, he turned the knob and came ruthlessly in; he went to the room where your baby slept; he put his cold hand on your baby's brow and it became marble; he put his hand on the little heart, and it stood still. And when you looked down through your blinding tears into the white face of your darling you cried: "Oh, my God, shall I never kiss the red lips again and look into the dancing, happy eyes?" And through the awful

gloom a voice spoke to you: "Yes, yes; you shall have your baby again, for I have brought life and immortality to light.' "

There is no satisfactory argument for immortality outside of Jesus Christ. Count Him out, and you can go only as far as pagan philosophy went. You can say that immortality is logical; you can say that the soul has an intuitive apprehension of a future life, and cries out in protest against annihilation; you can say that reason demands that the imperfections of this life shall eventually be perfected, and that its inequalities and injustices shall be rectified sometime, somewhere. That is as far as you can go. But Jesus carries you away beyond speculation, beyond hope, beyond faith even, and plants your feet upon the solid rock of assurance. "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." The empty tomb in the garden has become the symbol of immortality; the empty tomb in the garden predicts an empty tomb for me. Christ has risen from the dead. Hope trims her lamp and life takes on a value and meaning it never had before. Life is no more a useless drama, upon which the death curtain is about to fall nevermore to rise; it is no more a harp whose music is about to be hushed, because its strings are to be touched by the cold hands of death. Life is no more a flower blighted before it begins to unfold; life is no more a broken pitcher, a shattered vase, an extinguished torch. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has banished all such symbols. The grave is not life's goal, the tomb is not its terminus; death has become a triumphal arch through which as a weary pilgrim of the night man may enter into an endless day.

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen Thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

"Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest life in man and brute;
Thou madest death; and lo, Thy foot
Is on the skull which Thou hast made.

"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him; Thou art just.

"Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, Thou;
Our wills are Yours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

POEMS

POEMS

A MEMENTO

ITTLE KATIE now has left us,
Sleeping in her narrow bed,
Where the angels guarding o'er her
Whisper softly, "She is not dead."

She is not dead, but only sleepeth,
Dreaming dreams of sweetest bliss;
Roaming with the holy angels,
By the ever blessed kissed.

We will miss her in the morning,
Look for her at noon and night;
But our darkest hours of sorrow
Christian hope will render bright.

Close upon the feast of All Saints,
Jesus to Himself her took,
That another little angel
Might upon His features look.

Shall we mourn the one that's gone?
Would we wish her back again,
Only to suffer grief below,
Wandering in this world of pain?

No, to Heaven we give her up,
Though we fain would keep her here,
Trusting soon to meet our darling
In that land to all most dear.

FRIENDSHIP

THEY tell me that no love exists
Within this world so wondrous fair;
They say that passion holds the heart,
And that no love can linger there.
And so they speak of infant hearts
So trusting, fond and true;
And so to the fond, maternal heart
They charge deception too.
But still I know there is a pulse
More true than aught that is written here;
'Tis not the lover's selfish thought,
Nor yet what makes a mother dear;
But 'tis a soul inspiring flame
That oft takes birth in childhood hours
When with a chosen one we roam,
And stray amidst the sweet wild flowers.
It is not love they tell me,
For none can linger here,
Yet much I'd give to understand
What makes remembrance dear.

HER LIFE'S STORY

A SNOWFLAKE, pure from the Heavens above,
Was caught in the outstretched hands of love,
And so, to guard her charge from harm,
Love clasped it close to her bosom warm.
But the sensual warmth of this world of strife
Stifled the pure, frail snowflake's life,
And while fond love of her charge was proud,
The snowflake pined for its home—the cloud.
Thus slowly it wilted, and slowly it died;
And when fond love ope'd its hands full wide
The spotless snowflake she loved so dear
Had fled away and left a tear.

A DREAM

N dreaming once there came to me
All robed in whiteness, spirits three;
Each like a lily, wondrous fair,
With sunbeams gilding their flowing hair;
They came to me, their names to tell,
And what they said, I remember well.

The first was a maiden of lovely face,
In every movement a soul of grace,
And as she tossed her curls of gold
Her name to me in these words she told:

"I am the angel of earthly love,
More lovely than any angel above;
I hold entranced each thoughtless youth,
Winning my conquests by fable or truth."

The second came with pomp and show,
As if from her face her name I might know,
And with a movement of real command
She suddenly raised her tiny hand;
"You know me not?" the beauty cried,
Tossing her braids from side to side;
"You know me not? I'm the goddess of gold,
To whom every grace is speedily sold.

"To me come maidens petitioning low
The secret of gold, of wealth to know,
But I spurn them off with a look of pride
And send them weeping from my side;
For I am the goddess of gold and might
Hardening the heart, darkening the sight."

Then came the other in childish glee
And sprung in playfulness on my knee,
Kissed my hands like a baby bright,
Filling my soul with a strange delight;
Quick to the ground he sprang once more,
Crying, "Off to other climes I soar;
Fain would I spend an hour with thee
But the earthly angels are waiting for me."

"What is thy name, Oh, soul of joy?"
"My name!" cried the spirit, "I'm only a boy.

I with the children love to roam,
I make happy each childish home,
And midst the prattle of childish glee
There you must ever look for me."
With a kiss and a smile I saw him depart,
But still his image is in my heart;
For from that vision I learned the truth:
That naught is so sweet as a noble youth!

IN MEMORY OF SISTER ANNIE

I SPOKE thy name last night, when twilight's beams
Were trembling 'twixt the sombre shades of night,
And to my plaintive wail an answer came
That hushed the very still of silence quite.
I called thee when all nature's face was draped
In crape-like folds of midnight's mystic veil,
And lo! my soul was startled by a cry
That sounded like a far off distant "Hail!"
Was it the voiceless tongue of angels spoke thy name,
Framed in the soundless language of the soul,
Or was it thine own spirit touched my heart
To tell me thou hadst reached the long loved goal?
Say was it thou, in language strange but clear,
That whispered to my soul that thou wert near?
Say was it thou, that to my anguish said:
"Weep not, but pray—she whom you love is dead?"
Dead—thy name hung voiceless on my palsied lips,
Which on that sweetest name would fain to close,

But all too pure it seemed to nestle there
As dew drop nestles on the petaled rose.
Speechless I stood, as pilgrims often stand
Around the places in the holy land,
'Till, filled with holy awe, I sank beside my bed
And to the mighty Father thus I said:
"Father, I weep not—Take what thou hast given,
I thank Thee, God, I have a saint in Heaven."

Well may I call thee saint, at whose creation light
Divine was scattered through the sombre night,
And thy rare soul, a tender pledge, was given
From God the Father to His Son in Heaven,
Whilst at the sight the wondering angels bent,
Awed at the priceless gifts which God had lent
Unto a soul, destined so long to roam
Along the thorny path that leadeth home.
Well may I call thee saint; you, at whose birth
Seraphics bore thy spirit to the earth.
And at thy soul's rare beauty nature stood
Enraptured with its glorious motherhood,
Whilst in rare homage of that soul so bright,
Formed it a body, strangely pure and white;
Then in fierce dread the demons fled
And hid themselves among the cursed dead.
Well may I call thee saint, whose life was spent
In giving faith a proper habiliment,
Giving to virtues a material form,
Seeking to calm each rising storm,
Molding for hope a suited outer guise,
Whilst seeking still the light beyond the skies.

Thou art my saint, for oft thee have I sought
As trusting child his ghostly father might,
Nor have I left thee, but thy spirit's peace
Has driven from my soul it's troubles quite.
Oh! at thy grave I kneel, as at a shrine
Where martyrs' bones are cased with holy care,
For by thy sufferings silently endured
I feel a martyr's bones are truly there,
A martyr not of flowing blood 'tis true,
But martyr of God's purest love are you.
Say if I call thy name, when gossamer clouds
In lace-like folds drape deep the crimson west,
Oh, do thou whisper to my wearied soul
And calm my spirit to a peaceful rest.
And when at night my dreams are filled with thee,
And wakening I should call thy name in vain,
Oh sister, linger not, but come to me
And call me by my name just once again.
For I could weep my eyes in tears away,
And sigh away my heart in broken chords,
But I must stifle grief and humbly pray:
"Thou art not mine; thou art the Lord's."

TENNYSON'S IDEAL WOMAN

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THIS year—1909—marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Tennyson, and his centenary will be observed in August wherever the English-speaking races are to be found. Other poets of the nineteenth century have surpassed Tennyson in qualities which make for dazzling imagery and psychic revelation, but there is now no other English poet who is so near to his own people as the man who bore the queen's laurels for almost half a century. Tennyson was surely born in a golden age and given a poetic heritage.

No aspect of his work is nobler than that which regards womanhood. If a man's civilization is indicated by his attitude toward the sex that makes the home, then Alfred Tennyson held the rarest ideals of his age. Byron represented woman as a creature, half-tiger, half-spaniel. He seemed to regard her as either victim or oppressor. Burns, while revealing a nobler self in "The Cotter's Saturday Night," too frequently failed in appreciating the finer and purer qualities of womanhood. Into Wordsworth's poetry woman seldom intrudes, except as a part of nature, "which never did betray the heart that loved her."

Tennyson, from the Claribel of his first song to Edith Montfort, of "The Tourney," is the poet of the fairest and most appealing womanhood. Even his false Amy and frail Guinevere are saved from coarse scorn. The boy who grew up in Somersby rectory was blessed with the

guidance and inspiration of a mother whose simplicity was supreme wisdom. In "Isabel," one of his early poems, is found a description of this ideal woman with "eyes not down-dropt nor over-bright." In these days of feverish and cheap fiction, exploiting the ways and works of the neurotic woman, it is comforting to read such lines as these:

> "The laws of marriage character'd in gold
> Upon the blanched tablets of her heart,
> A love still burning upward, giving light
> To read those laws; an accent very low
> In blandishment, but a most silver flow
> Of subtle-paced counsel in distress
> Right to the heart and brain, tho' undescried,
> Winning its way with extreme gentleness
> Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride;
> A courage to endure and to obey;
> A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,
> Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,
> The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife."

In "The Princess" Tennyson dealt most fully with what is called "the woman question." This poem, called by the writer himself a "medley," is not such as would appeal to the modern defender of the suffragist. Here we have revolting womanhood in the half-barbaric princess, who will have none of the love or homage of the prince to whom she was betrothed in childhood, establishing a university from which man was to be utterly excluded. The prince, as we were sure from the first, breaks through the barriers and finally convinces the erring princess that love is the solution of most questions and that "the woman's cause is man's." Plainly, the Princess Ida is not a lovable woman, either as a preacher of ultra-independence, or a sentimental, trained nurse

looking after the wounded hero, and the reader is disposed to doubt their ultimate happiness. If the story of this poem is somewhat grotesque and the characters unreal and anti-pathetic, the work itself is so beautifully wrought that we must be glad that woman's increasing interest in public matters turned the Tennysonian genius to this subject. The lyrics scattered through the poem are immortal snatches of song, giving in melody the maternal idea which is to save and cherish the "crowning race of mankind."

Again the poet's thoughts turn to his mother, of those far-off rectory days and, in justification of his ideal of woman, he exclaims:

> "Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
> Not learned, save in gracious household ways;
> Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
> No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
> In angel instincts, breathing paradise,
> Interpreter between the Gods and men.
> "Happy he
> With such a mother! Faith in womankind
> Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
> Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
> He shall not blind his soul with clay."

Such a tribute has not often been offered by a poet to the woman whose gentle personality has influenced all his thought of her sex. It is no wonder that Tennyson's attitude towards woman, however ridiculed by those who consider the domestic virtues old-fashioned, appealed to the tenderness and reverence which are found beneath the selfishness and cynicism of human nature and made his "Enoch Arden," "The Day Dream" and "The Lord of Burleigh" familiar in every household.

Those who would represent Tennyson as the poet of

an easy optimism, indifferent to the terrible forms of suffering which the deepest affection may entail, have surely read only a part of his work. Is there in the range of English poetry a more awful poem than "Rizpah," with the forlorn, impassioned cry of the mother, whose boy was hanged, echoing upon the night wind? Tennyson was too much the artist to harp upon the horrible, until sense of its ghastliness was dulled. But he leaves us the masterpiece of woe as a proof that his was no easily-bought faith, that he had come through great tribulation to "the sunnier side of doubt."

In his own exquisite love story we have a poem as gentle as the flowers in his island garden. It must be admitted that a poet is brought face to face with bitter realities when he considers the prosaic responsibilities of everyday housekeeping. Tennyson's love for Emily Sillwood was so unselfish that he shrank from inflicting the hardships of poverty upon one who seemed little fitted to endure them. Their marriage in 1850, when the poet was 41 and his bride 37 years of age, may not seem romantic to the readers of the "marshmallow school of fiction," but the account of that quiet wedding in the little English church seems like a bit of the truest plighting between those who verily practiced plain living and high thinking. The poet's wife had the same exquisite gentleness which Tennyson had found so restful in his mother's character. Their home life was that of peace and seclusion—"a world of care shut out, a world of love shut in"—which, in spite of the vagaries of the "smart set," remains the ideal of the Anglo-Saxon race. The fame and gold which finally became the poet's obvious reward never seemed to have altered the peace-

ful simplicity of the beautiful home at Farringford, Isle of Wight, or the serenity of Haslemere, Surrey. Lady Tennyson, like other happy women, "had no history," and found her fame through her husband's genius and the affection of her two sons, Hallam and Lionel. Thus, the most representative poet of the Victorian era was fortunate beyond most mortals in the peace which blessed him at his own fireside.

In his "Juvenilia" poems, Tennyson gives us vague and shadowy feminine portraits. Adeline, Rosalind, Margaret and Eleanore are the fleeting fancies; Lady Clara Vere de Vére is not one to be desired or remembered, and the Lady of Shalott is akin to the shadows of which she grew weary. In "A Dream of Fair Women" we come into another world, where there are women of vital charm and strength. The sorceress of the Nile, "brow-bound with burning gold," flames into life once more. Then come those heroines of lowlier life—"The Miller's Daughter," "The Gardener's Daughter," and "Dora," in which the same beauty and grace invest the maidens of the cottage as crowned Rosalind herself. For some reason or other, "Dora" has never been popular among women. I have yet to find a woman who is familiar with Tennyson's poems who cherishes any feeling but violent dislike for the gentle creature who seems to bear a trace of Uriah Heep's "umbleness." The poem "Maud" has excited more varied comment than any other Tennysonian work. Yet, whatever may be thought of its half-crazed hero and its final militant outbreak, who can forget Maud herself, the lovely English girl among the flowers of an old-world garden? There is the conventional feud between the houses to

lend romance to the hero's love for the girl who has "fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life."

It is to "The Idylls of the King," however, that most of us turn for Tennyson's most picturesque types of womanhood—Guinevere, Ettarre, Elaine, Enid, and the wily Vivien. Of these Elaine is, perhaps, the best known. She is described as fair and meek—the "lily maid of Astolat"—and we regard with doubting wonder the girl who died for love of Lancelot. She is usually represented as shy and shrinking. Yet we cannot ignore that Elaine so far forgot womanly precedent as to approach the knight with a frenzied admission of her love for him in the outburst: "I have gone mad! I love you! Let me die!" This was stormy language for a lily maid and might better be uttered by one of George Bernard Shaw's masterful heroines. Tennyson refers to Katie Willows as a "maiden of our century—yet most meek." Elaine's fading away over Lancelot's indifference to her profound affection is assuredly a weakness not of our time, but, for that very reason, perhaps, the damsel in her lonely tower has made all the stronger appeal to the money-loving people of the nineteenth century. Queen Guinevere, herself, is a splendid figure, even in her prone misery at Arthur's feet. She is remotely beautiful and does not create the illusion of humanity. Her final resort to the convent life, her succession to the high office of abbess, and her passing to "where beyond these voices there is peace" are the dramatic close of a too-tempestuous career. In contrast to Guinevere's guilty magnificence, we have the glory of the lovely Enid and her wooing by Geraint. Never were courtly robes more memorable than the faded silk which this daughter of a poor

knight wore, with a humble pride more becoming than her vanity. Enid is the sweetest and truest of Tennyson's women, purer than Guinevere, stronger than Elaine, a very princess of the days of chivalry; and Geraint is worthy of the maid in the faded silk, even though he fails for a time in chivalrous trust. The knights of Camelot are a goodly company, but the ladies are more memorable and Enid may haunt the mind when Lancelot is forgotten. The ideal of womanhood, throughout these tales of mythical court and a ghost-like king, is that of gentleness and purity—the conception of woman's nature and work which the poet formed during boyhood and which he held through all the tract of years.

Tennyson's deep sense of the immortality of the soul, his strong belief in that "Strong Son of God, Immortal Love," led him to seek the abiding element in all human relationship. Hence his ideal for love and friendship is infinitely removed from the sensual or the selfish. Truth and honor must enter into such intimacies or they are of no spiritual significance. Death, which pressed in all its dark tragedy so early upon the poet's heart, has no power over the supreme passion. Not for Tennyson the lightly scornful question asked by Swinburne: "What love was ever as deep as the grave?" as the wind softly stirred the weeds in the ghost of a garden. To the poet of "In Memoriam" there must be another life where love is renewed in fairer forms. Otherwise, all this joy and suffering is in vain and the world is without form and void. It is an exacting doctrine for either love or friendship, but it is the uplift of all emotion to a nobler plane, the investing of life with a profundity which means immortality. In this spiritualizing of a relation-

ship which some of the early poets of the nineteenth century reduced to brutality, Tennyson and Browning have left us a heritage of golden hope and inspiration. A thrill of grateful revelation also touches our suffering and bewildered humanity when Browning declares passionately as he fights his way through "Prospice:"

> Oh, thou soul of my soul, I shall meet thee again
> And with God be the rest!

"The Princess" gives the unfading picture, for all time, of the "statelier Eden" which may come back to this weary old earth. It ignores the great change which woman's entrance upon professional and business life has made in the consideration of feminine ambition and activities. It answers no questions regarding what shall be done with the superfluous woman, what is to become of the college graduate, or whether woman shall have the ballot. It is, after all, no problem-poem, but a love-story in which the tender passion has an extremely uneven course. The conclusion is an eloquent plea for woman's wider destiny:

> "Let her make herself her own
> To give or keep, to live and learn to be
> All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
> For woman is not undeveloped man,
> But diverse; could we make her as the man,
> Sweet love were slain; his dearest bond is this:
> Not like to like but like to difference.
> Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
> The man is more of woman, she of man;
> He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
> Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
> She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
> Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
> Till at the last she set herself to man,
> Like perfect music unto noble words."

THE DEATH OF MOSES

THE DEATH OF MOSES

MY dear friends: By universal consent Moses was the most conspicuous figure in the old testament times. He was great in every sense—great as an emancipator, organizer, leader, and legislator; and as such, his name can never fade from the annals of time. Every page of his life is instinct with interest, and every incident in connection with his unique death is full of suggestion and fraught with lessons of great value to every student of the Bible.

Tonight I would fain speak to you on some of these lessons. It was one sin that shut Moses out from the promised possession: At Meribah he had committed the sin of passion and presumption. It was only the impulse of a moment, and no doubt it had long before faded from the memory of Israel, and seems as nothing when placed in the balance against a life of the most exemplary and heroic obedience. Yet at the last Moses is confronted by it on the very borderland of the promised inheritance. There it stands, a weird sentinel, with flaming sword, sternly forbidding his entrance into Canaan.

Ah! my dear friends, we do well to remember that the remission of sin, as a matter of fact does not involve the remission of all its consequences. One of the most solemn facts which confronts us every day is what we may call the irreversible sequences of human conduct. Flowing from the most trivial action of our lives, there is a stream of sequence which may be modified and diverted,

but never entirely arrested or reversed. God Almighty, so far as we can see, does not shut off certain consequences of human wrongdoing. There is a law at once of the material and moral world, known as the "Law of continuity." In this connection we may call it the self-propagating power of human action.

Philosophy tells us there is no such thing in the universe as annihilation. No atom can drop out of being, no force can be destroyed. The sigh of a child, the flutter of an insect's wing, in their effects, will continue forever; they transmit influences which vibrate throughout all space, and time; which touch every star and trinkle through every sphere. It is literally true that the universe is a great whispering-gallery, so that every secret you whisper or word you speak floats throughout all space, and may repeat itself throughout all eternity. Fiske teaches that even the visitations of the brain, as well as those of the lips, transcribe themselves upon an ethereal medium, by which we are permeated and developed; that all nature, within and without, is a kind of vast phonograph, which may repeat in other worlds the thoughts we think, as well as the deeds we do and the words we say in this. Whether this is really so in the material world or not, it is certainly so in the moral world. Every act of ours becomes a fact, which in its turn becomes a force—a moral force which perpetuates itself forever. Human deeds, like human souls, are instinct with immortality. They never cease to be; they write themselves upon a material that is imperishable, and in characters that are indelible. Our destiny of today was determined by the deeds of yesterday, and our

destiny of tomorrow will be determined by the deeds of today.

That small secret sin of ours of the long ago, today exerts its demon influence over us and others; it has imparted a downward bias, which, as we may know, has cost us many a struggle and many a tear. Well may Binney say: "A right act strikes a chord that extends through the whole universe, touches all moral intelligence, and conveys its vibrations to the very bosom of God." In the same way a wrong act sends a deadly tremor throughout the moral empire of God, exerts a baneful influence everywhere, and touches chords in the eternal world which will never cease to vibrate. Sins may be forgiven, but as facts they cannot be obliterated, nor can the influences they set in motion be stopped or reversed. God does not dissever the causal tie between a sinful deed and its natural results, because He does not undertake to change the nature of things or cancel the law of cause and effect. Friends, nature hates sin and is continually on the track of the sinner. Physiology abhors the violator of her laws. Man's stomach hates gluttony, and makes the transgressor wince; the brain hates drunkenness and drags the transgressor down; the spinal cord hates the excess and indulgence of the prodigal. This prodigal may return to his father's house and receive forgiveness; yes, but his health is lost, the golden years of youth are wasted, and his punishment must, therefore, go on. Thus the sweetest cup is tinged with bitterness, the most beautiful sky is fleeced with clouds, and even the glory of Mount Nebo is dimmed with the shadows of Meribah.

Friends, the death of Moses not only teaches the ir-

reversible sequences of human action; we learn from Mount Nebo the illusiveness of life. There is an illusive element running through all human life. Friends, human life is not a lie, but its promises are seldom literally fulfilled. The things we anticipate the most, seldom meet our anticipations. Moses had hoped to enter Canaan, but the earthly Canaan he never entered. Canaan, with its beautiful skies, its fertile soil, its romantic hills and valleys, had been the goal of this great man's ambition and the subject of his fondest dreams. For this he had trod the burning sands and endured all those years the hardships of the desert, and in that fair and free land he had hoped to die; but now, when the object for which he had so long lived and labored is just within his reach, the cup of hope is dashed to the ground and his lips are not allowed to taste its contents. Into that land promised to his fathers, which had been the theme of song and story, and which had floated before his fancy amid the dusty marches and dire conflicts of the wilderness like a beautiful vision, he is not allowed to enter.

Is this not a true picture of human life? The picture stretches before our fancy like some fair and fertile Canaan, and we are bending our energies and centering our hopes upon it; but at last, when we stand upon our Mount Nebo, we shall find, on its earthward side, it was but a dream—that we have mistaken shadows for substances, moving phantasms for realities, and falling meteors for fixed stars.

No mirage of the desert can be more illusive than are the promises of our present existence. Human fancy flings around every object in the distance an exaggerated photo-sphere, and thus things seldom prove to be just

what we expected. The boy looks forward with bounding hope to the dawn of manhood, and his fancy builds and plants some enchanting paradise; but into that paradise he seldom enters. Not otherwise is it with manhood and old age. We never find that life's promises are fulfilled to the letter; things are not always what they appear to be, for because of some optical illusion we seldom see them as they are.

Ambition points to the wreath or bejewelled coronet, and the youthful aspirant strains every nerve to win and wear the same; but when the prize is won it soon fades upon the brow that throbbed and ached to obtain it. Ambition never gets what it panted for. Avarice sees in the possible or prospective fortune a gorgeous valhalla of sensuous delight, but when the fortune has come, the valhalla has disappeared.

Friends, there is this illusive element everywhere in human life. Would you have it otherwise? Is this not one way in which we are being educated for higher and more substantial things? Though human life is illusive, it need never prove delusive; though we do not get what we live for, like Moses we may rise to the possession of that which is better. You offer your child a trinket or toy as a stimulus to study, but when the prize is won even he will find that its value is as nothing compared with the intellectual benefit which his efforts to obtain it have secured.

What though the man of ambition finds that the wreath he has agonized so much for soon begins to fade, if the strain and struggle to win it has made him all the more a man? What if the man of money finds at last that his heaps of glittering gold fail to satisfy the hunger of

his nature, if the honest chase after wealth has secured that concentration of effort, that fixity of purpose, that discipline of mind, that development of faculty which expands the horizon and enlarges the whole scope and sweep of his being. These qualities are more important than earthly substance or worldly wealth. What if men do not get the lower, if they get the higher. What if they do not get the lesser, if they get the greater. What if they do not get the shadow, if they get the substance. What if Moses did not enter into the earthly Canaan, if from Mount Nebo's sacred summit he had an entrance ministered to him abundantly into that heavenly Canaan, of which the lower was but the distant suggestion, the dim shadow.

Friends, have you followed me in our discussion of this great man's life? As I gaze tonight on Nebo's lovely mountain, I see there a message to the Christian concerning the true idea as to the nature of death.

It is suggestive that in going to die, Moses is commanded not to descend into mysterious valleys or monotonous plain, but to ascend into the sunlit summit of the mountain. Is not this incident symbolic? Death is an ascent in the scale of being. Death is the angel hand removing the material scaffolding, but the inner structure remains unimpaired. It unveils the statue, but does not mar or deface its beautiful proportions. It is the spirit being disrobed of its material covering in order to be clothed with a celestial enswathement. It unpacks that celestial instrument, the soul, for use in the upper orchestra, but the keys and chords remain unbroken.

On the other side of this question, there is no death. Dying here is being born yonder. The death of the body

here is the birth of the soul there. We on this side of the grave bend o'er the cold and sheeted clay, and with tearful eye and breaking heart we sob—a man is dead; the angels on the other side sweep their harps and sing—a child is born. Death on earth is birth in heaven. We robe ourselves in mourning; they array themselves in gladness. We weep and sigh; they smile and sing. We condole; they congratulate. We sadly toll our funeral notes; there they peal the marriage bells of heaven and cause the heavenly atmosphere to ring with notes of welcome.

When shall we learn that death is not extinction, but emancipation; not the light of life quenched forever, but the light obscured for a moment by a passing cloud which projects on earth its shadow? When shall we be able to say: "O death, where is thy sting?" O brother-man, by and by, in speaking of life and death we shall transpose our terms. What the world calls living is really dying, and what it calls dying is the soul beginning to live—passing into life. Here our spirits are cribbed, cabined, confined in a diseased and dying body; we are prisoners. Here we have sinned, or our fathers have sinned, so much that each is a kind of portable penitentiary; here we suffer so much that some of us have felt that this planet was a kind of floating hospital for incurables. On this side of the grave we are exiles, but on the other side we shall be citizens. Here we are like orphans; there we shall feel that we are children. Here we are captives; there we shall be like freemen. On this side we are disguised and wandering about incognito—unknown to ourselves and others; there we shall be dis-

closed and proclaimed as children of God and peers—nay, princes of the royal family of heaven.

I see in the death of Moses not only a suggestion as to the true idea of the nature of death—I see a lesson on the juvenility of godliness. "Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated." I have an idea that had man never sinned, he would never have tottered beneath the burden of old age. Godliness never gets old. There is no face in heaven furrowed by years, and no form decrepit with age; there perpetual youth blooms on every cheek and beams in every eye.

I know an old man whose eye is growing dim, and across whose brow the years have traced their deepening furrows. He is certainly not the man he used to be; sense fails him, and his footsteps falter. But though the outward man is thus in the last stages of decay, the inward man is buoyed up with an immortal hope and is animated by the spirit of eternal juvenility. He said to me the other day: "I am not old; the house in which I live is getting old, but the spirit within me, with hope and love, is young as ever."

On the other hand, here is a youth who has for years been shooting the rapids of dissipation and drunkenness, and though the sun of life has not yet touched the zenith, he is very old. The springs of life are dry; his eye is bleared; his form is stooped; his hands shake, and sin has drawn its dark lines upon his countenance—its "curves of guilt and shame." Oh! how young, and yet how old! How sensual pleasures blight and unbridled passions burn and leave the man a wreck before his time. Sin means premature age; Godliness means per-

petual youth. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come."

Moses lived a Godly life, and after his death "the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended." I see in that fact a suggestion as to the place which the dead are entitled to in the hearts of the living. There are duties that we owe to the dead as well as the living. I sometimes think the time has come for Christians to inaugurate a revolution among us so far as our mourning and funeral customs are concerned. I will not, however, enter on that line of thought just now. I only wish to say that there are two extremes we ought to avoid in our behavior toward the dead: First, that of an affected stoicism; second, that of a silly sentimentalism.

There are those whose behavior toward the dead is coldly and cruelly stoical. They studiously refrain from every expression of fond remembrance, or unnaturally repress every feeling of grief. This is wrong; it is both weak and wicked. You may just as well expect that while a limb is being amputated the conscious patient will not writhe or wince with pain, as to expect that a heart whose most sensitive sensibility has been lacerated with bereavement will be insensitive to anguish. It is no disgrace for such a man to yield to the inward pressure, and to shed a sincere and manly tear over the bier of the dead. In fact, such tears, within limit, ought to be encouraged. I thank God that he has given us the power to weep, for often the heart would break if it had no such outlet as that which tears afford. By all means let us,

at the proper time, go to the grave, and, if we must, let us sprinkle the sod with our tears of gratitude and grief. But such tears must ever be controlled by rational and Christian consideration. It must not be nursed until our life is unhinged and our nature unmanned; it must not be prolonged until it has drivelled into sheer sentimentalism, or until the feigned sigh and tear suggest the hypocrite. We must never appear as if our hearts were entombed with the dead; we must not allow grief for the dead to unfit us for the duties we owe the living. The grief of Israel was great while it lasted, but we read: "So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended." They were at last aroused by the bugle-call of duty, which they at once heard and obeyed. Then the billows of active life were allowed to close over the grave of their dead leader; their battalions were once more marshalled; their ranks filled up, and on they marched to other conquests and to other victories.

Let it be so with us. Let us who have been lately bereaved remember that we must not become dead while we live for the sake of those who live while they are dead. Let us embalm the memory of the blessed in our heart of hearts, enshrine their virtues in our character, perpetuate their influence for God in our lives; but let us not allow our griefs to chill every feeling of the heart, or paralyze every energy of our life. Listen today to the trumpet-call of duty, which is the voice of God. Dash away the bitter tear; fall into line with the great army of God; draw your sword from its scabbard for the conflicts that are yet to be won. And at last, when the sword shall drop from our nerveless grasp, may death be to us what it was to Moses—only the Father's footfall com-

ing to escort his weary child home in the twilight of a long, busy, and beautiful day; only the rustling of the angel's wings coming to convey our emancipated spirits to the skies; only the opening of the morning gates through which our souls in triumph may sweep into the realm of unclouded and endless day. Then shall we discover the unreality of death, and understand that

"There is no death; the stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore;
And bright in heaven's jewelled crown
They shine for evermore."

ENTHUSIASM FOR OUR IDEALS

ENTHUSIASM FOR OUR IDEALS

MY dear friends: Enthusiasm for our ideals is an ancient phrase, and that is one reason I have selected this subject tonight. For though nothing is so difficult, nothing is so needed as the re-stating, the re-vivifying of the commonplace. Truths, like the coins that pass from hand to hand, become worn and defaced, and need frequently to have their image and superscription stamped upon them afresh. But, as I say, the task is never an easy one. Therefore, before we go farther, let us all, speaker and audience alike, pray John Milton's prayer:

> "What in me is dark
> Illumine; what is low raise and support."

Enthusiasm? It is an inward fire. Fire is power which can be used in the accomplishment of purposes, worthy and unworthy; fire can transform the hardest ore into implements for the use of man; fire can warm his freezing body; fire can also consume his proudest spires with the common dust of the earth. But do we for this reason condemn fire as a worthless element, which should never be used? Friends, with one accord, you answer "No." And yet, because enthusiasm sometimes glows with fervor and burns with unrest, this materialistic age brands enthusiasm as worthless and its possessor as a fanatic. The trend of our generation is to put all things

to the test: An age of arithmetical calculation; an age of dry logic; an age of breathless, mechanical force; that has forgotten that its very soil has again and again been crimsoned with the fiery blood of enthusiasm.

Show me a great man anywhere in any great field, and I will show you a man, every fibre of whose being is charged with enthusiasm. Point out to me any great movement that has swept the earth with power, and I will point you to a movement, originated in the mind and carried forward by the will of some tremendous enthusiast.

Let us notice some of the obstacles in the way of realizing our ideals, however enthusiastically we may begin them. Very prominent among these is the opposition by others. Joseph was ever enthusiastic in striving towards his highest ideals, but his brothers strove desperately to thwart him in every important issue of his young life. Thus has it ever been in every enthusiastic soul. We behold war against Isaiah's ideals, the wicked king, Neziah; war against the moral passion of John the Baptist; we see the wild excesses of Herod at last leading to John's death; war against the stern enthusiasm of the Stoics, we see the license of the Roman emperors. But in every case it has been the dream of the prophet that has turned anarchy into order, transformed organized tyranny into organized society. What the prophet dreams today is realized in the laws of tomorrow. When God ceases to lend to the nation's leader, all aglow with enthusiastic ideals, we know the work of that nation is done. Tell me the number and characters of the idealists and I will tell you the character of a nation.

Opposition to our ideals, on the other hand, often develops the character. Here is the boy Charles Dickens, robbed of his childhood, doomed to carry a man's burden while almost a babe; laboring amidst dust and filth while he should have been gamboling on the green. Heart-hungry, love was denied him, but the life that was buried brought forth a perfume and beauty that charmed the world. Here is poor Charles Lamb, essayist and humorist, with a great rich blessing throbbing in his heart for man, but doomed to see his poor, crazed sister do violence to her mother; and in that hour know that he must forever bury his ambition for a home and a literary career, and become a guardian for his darkened sister. Then he enters upon as deep and sad a tragedy as our world has ever seen; but out of that destitution and loss came a fruit and a flower that delight the world. Could he come back, Charles Lamb would find a nation ready to do him honor on the very spot where he once felt neglect.

There are barriers in the way of the student thirsting for knowledge as great, if not greater, than in any sphere of life. If he is to succeed, he must often toil while others sleep, burning the precious midnight oil. Let us persevere then, for necessity may be a hard school-master but it is generally the best. Although the ordeal of adversity is one from which we naturally shrink, yet when it comes it must be manfully and bravely encountered. "Sweet indeed is the use of adversity;" it reveals to us our powers and calls forth our energies. If there be real worth in your character, like sweet herbs it will give forth its sweetest perfume when hard pressed. "Curses," says an old proverb, "are the ladders that lead to heaven." It often requires a higher discipline

and a stronger character to bear up under good fortune than under adversity. Some generous natures kindle and glow with prosperity, but there are many to whom great success has no such influence. But more potent in destroying the enthusiasm of our ideals, than that of others, is our own weak selves.

We begin by being satisfied only with the highest; we soon lower our ideals and become content with the good. Slowly the splendor of the dream fades, the last notes of the divine music die and we sink back to the level of the common-place character and career. How is it we promise so much and do so little? Is the standard of ideal excellence too high, and inertia easier than struggle? This lowering of the ideal is often seen in those whom we thought the bravest and the best; from whom we could not hope too much. We have seen the man enter politics, sworn to the highest ideals, but because he would not vote for the schemes of his fellows he finds that his colleagues would do nothing in return for his plans. What is the result? He resigns his ideals and accepts what he calls the inevitable, and begins to gamble in votes. We have seen it in the young merchant in whose look once glowed devotion to the best, but in whose gaze may be seen the glint of genius; we have seen it in the artist from whose canvas the divine line has faded, and explain this decline by saying: "When they painted ideal loveliness, the people let them starve, and so they paint what the people want."

It is not enough that you should merely have ideals; you should feed those ideals and nurture those noble impulses. Desiring, we must do; resolving, we must choose, perform and be, for there is a great gulf be-

tween admiring noble qualities, and possessing those virtues. Many a man buys a choice picture, and because it hangs on the wall he thinks he has truly seen the picture; so men invest in libraries, and because they have the books they feel that they have read them. It is one thing to commit the Sermon on the mount, and it is another thing to be the fleshly embodiment of it in life and live a Christlike excellence. I once knew an old Scotchman who never thought of living, or even reading, the gospel, but whenever I would meet him, if he were drunk, he would stop and endeavor to expound the third chapter of John to me; but his teachings never entered his life. Many of us are like the nobleman who exhausted all his treasure in building his palace and had nothing left with which to furnish it. So he went into the great banqueting hall and put down a card bearing these words: "Persian rug costing 100,000 francs," yet the floors were bare. On the walls he tacked cards reading: "Painted by an old master," yet the walls were only plaster; no sign of pictures. On the windows he tacked the legend: "These curtains are of priceless lace," yet only cobwebs and dust were on the windows. On the ceiling which was bare and covered with smoke, he wrote: "Copied from the frescoes of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel". So men deceive themselves in the soul's house, and as a result there exists in their lives nothing but leaves instead of the ideal fruit of life; mere names instead of realities.

Let us now observe what enthusiasm for ideals has accomplished in the world. In the field of art, enthusiasm for an ideal is indispensable. Our strong youths and blushing maidens stand today amid arts, vast and beautiful, surrounded by all the facts of man's history, breath-

ing out an atmosphere pure and refined; but those who do not storm the gates of the good and the beautiful, with hearts all aglow, with enthusiasm for their ideals, might as well be poor savages sitting on the banks of the Niger, whose souls sit in silence or starve to death in a silent dungeon. What are the fine arts but flaming fagots of passion, snatched from a burning soul and lodged upon canvas? See Pacchasius standing before his canvas, his eyes flashing with fire, his life quivering with emotion, as he holds in his hand his immortal brush. Before him lies the captive, bound and writhing, as they beat and torture him, and tear afresh his gaping wounds. The painter's brain is on fire; his blood runs cold; his ears stand on end as he tries to catch the last gasp of the dying man: "See! the death dew is gathering upon his brow; the last ray of light is in his eye; one more beat of the heart; one more quiver of the lips; God! could I but paint a dying groan." Oh! Pacchasius, your enthusiasm for a low ideal has stabbed morality, dethroned conscience, but triumphed in art.

All masterpieces of brush and chisel; all great works of literature and music divine, are but towering peaks of enthusiasm for an ideal. This noble passion led Dante to dip the tips of his snow-white wings in the sort of the region Inferno.

The privileges we enjoy today and the freedom we prize would never have been ours, had it not been for the enthusiasts of the civil war. We see our beloved Lincoln. Behold his grand head and far-seeing, deep, sad eyes, looking out upon a horizon black with storm, yet holding on with unmovable patience and fortitude; struggling ceaselessly towards the day when conflict between the

sections would cease, and God's image be wrought in ebony no less than in ivory. Renaissance does not mean a single Dante, nor the crusade a single St. Bernard, nor the revolutionary war a single Washington, nor the civil war a single Lincoln or Grant. Many a boy trudged in the dusky ranks, whose only reward was a single line in the newspaper announcing to grief-bowed parents the cheerful laying down of his life for his country. It was only Thurston's memorable preparation of forces that held the broken line at Shiloh, climbed the flame swept hills of Chattanooga, and stormed the clouds at Lookout Heights. Enthusiasm marched with Sherman to the sea, rode with Sheridan in the valley of the Shenandoah, and gave Grant the victory at Appomattox; enthusiasm saved the union, kept the stars in the flag, and made "niggers" men. Let the impassioned life of American patriots once more take up the song:

> "In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,
> With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
> As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
> For God is marching on."

The history of religion has been one of enthusiasm for a Christian ideal. At first among the simple pious people, soon it found one possessing it who was born amid the classic glories of a land, every foot of which was hallowed in learning, oratory, poetry and song; with the scholarship of Aristotle, the eloquence of Demosthenes, a man before whom the learned Plato would have gladly bent in reverent recognition. Such a man was Paul, the enthusiast for a Christian ideal. No wonder the scholarship of such a mind with a soul seized and possessed by a great ideal should have been the greatest theologian the

world has ever known; no wonder his tongue dripped with enthusiasm for a Christian ideal should have hushed the cry of the Roman eagle; no wonder his soul flaming with spiritual fire should look up amid the storm of Lystra, amid the great clots of blood and dirt that covered his hair and face, and say: "None of these things move me;" no wonder that with manacles upon his hands and feet he could look out through the prison bars and exclaim: "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; I have finished the course; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day."

Again the French flower of chivalry is dead. The hillsides are pillowed with graves. Enthusiasm for a Christian ideal enters the soul of a poor girl, who from brooding over her countless wrongs seemed to see visions and hear voices saying unto her: "Go, go to France." She stirs the impulsive French from center to circumference; she inspires dispirited French soldiers with new hopes and new courage; her eyes flash terrible wrath; her charmed banner of white lilies waves and flames in the breeze of heaven. Listen to the roaring of cannon and whizzing of arrows; behold, the English flee. Enthusiasm has gained the victory and leads the French from campaign to coronet, but the trial of her enthusiasm is yet to come. The people forget their deliverance. Oh God, the ingratitude. All the priests and bishops of England rush like hell-hounds at her heels; all the lies ever invented by human brains were brought to bear against her. Joan, will you not resume the power that moves you? Hear her say: "I cannot be untrue to my voices." The stake is preferred. Oh! Joan, we pity you so much.

Why will you die? The fagots are lighted; they lick their cruel tongues about her feet. Joan, will you not recant? The flames rise higher and higher; one more minute. See the sweet light gather in her eyes; behold the heavenly tinted bloom upon her cheek. Oh! enthusiasm for a Christian ideal, thou hast triuumphed over the power of death.

What power is there that can stay an earnest soul charged with enthusiasm for a high ideal. Men may put thorns in your pathway, but if you have this enthusiasm every thorn will put forth and glow as the rose of summer. No power outside of yourselves can close you in. Close the enthusiasm within prison bars, and there will go out a "Pilgrim's Progress" to grace the pages of the literature of the world; close his eyes to earthly scenes and there will flash upon his spiritual vision the resplendent glory of a "Paradise Lost." Pierce his side, nail his hands and feet to a cross, and amid the singing of angels and arch-angels, he shall reign throughout the countless ages upon the throne of heaven. It is high time that every youth should bear the gates of learning. Say: "I love them that love me." Young man, if you haven't enthusiasm for your ideal, whip yourselves to that faculty, which working out with reason makes a man a scholar; working out with imagination makes him an artist or an inventor; working out with his gifts of speech makes him an orator; working out from poverty makes him a philanthropist; working on against impurity makes him a reformer; working for freedom makes him a patriot and a hero; working for God makes him a saint and a seer.

Oh, friends, you will often feel the need of a divine

helper in the hour of faded hopes and shattered ideals; when far from home and loved ones you will need to call a heavenly rescuer. God, who will now hear your prayer will hear you then. Risk not your soul in the great future without an ideal home beyond. Be enthusiastic over it. Remember the prayers of friends and teachers will follow you; and when you may be on life's voyage, mother's prayers will follow you and hover over you as a guardian angel. Oh, be worthy of father and mother; be all that their most enthusiastic ideals plan for you. Be noble, true citizens of America. Be followers of the greatest ideal enthusiast the world has ever known—He who said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel."

THE GIRDERS OF GOODNESS

THE GIRDERS OF GOODNESS

MY dear friends: There are some girders that tether a man to decency. Tonight, as I stand here looking out on this large audience, I ask: "What makes you as good as you are?"

Perhaps you are good from the very highest motive —that you love the good. Your heart's love naturally reverts to Jesus Christ, as a man or woman reverts to the thought of some one most loved, who is absent in travel, or gone to a far distant land. Your life swings as naturally to the cadences of God as glide the brooks along the bewildering highway under the shadow of the trees, out in the open meadow land, toward the river, and from the river to the sea, but have evermore the laughter of spring time's music in their voices. Whatsoever in nature, in art or in literature is pure and lovely and of good repute, you receive into your life. Matthew Arnold said: "The world is forwarded by having its attention directed to the best things," and no man learns to be a lover of the best in life who is not himself ennobled by his love. The church, whose mission it is to create the upward life, ought in every possible way to encourage the upward look. Religion is akin with all that is pure and lovely, and anything that will refine a man's tastes and sweeten his atmosphere, everything that will push back his horizon and lift him, though it be ever so little, out of the animalism in which so many are imbedded, is to be welcomed as his friend and ally. The

Christian worker can do nothing where there is no spiritual instinct; so long as that remains dead or dormant, he is helpless. If, when a man takes a vacation, he would rather spend it in a saloon than in wandering over the green fields, or listening to the multitudinous laughter of the sea; if he never reads anything except the inane puerilities of some of our sensational press; if he thinks "The Man Behind the Gun" finer music than the "Messiah"—one hardly knows how to begin preaching to that man. Speaking to him of the best of all things is like knocking at doors which for many years have been shut and barred. But if the voice of the lake or a glimpse of the purple hills can send a thrill through his every fibre; if the great masters of music and of song—a Handel or a Wordsworth—have power to sway his soul as the wind sways the standing corn, in that man the doors of the spirit stand wide open, and who shall say through which open door the truth of God, God Himself, may not enter in to take possession? Ah, my friends, would that you and I might always fix our minds on those things that are pure, lovely and good; filling our lives with high and holy interests, and binding ourselves by a hundred ties to the good, the beautiful, and the true!

Friends, why are you as good as you are? Do you love the good? Have you a high motive in the thought that goodness is well pleasing to God? Or is it because you know that it pays to be good—in money affairs, in social life, in body, mind and soul? Some people are good because they are afraid of hell; others because they are afraid of the law. But outside of this entire gamut of motives, I venture that there are other girders that bind

you to goodness. There are holy influences which have confirmed you in virtuous habits—they held you steady until your career was well begun, as the girders of a building give solidity to the structure. There is the respect of the community. One of the advantages of a permanent residence is that the good opinion of a man's neighbors will hold him in check, while if he stood entirely alone, he might be inclined to indecision. There is the "burden" of a family, as some very thoughtless people call it. The "ballast" of a family would often be more expressive. To be "tied down" to the fact that there are mouths for you to feed and bodies to clothe should be a blessing to every man.

Someone's love is the strongest girder. O man, the love of a wife, the love of a mother, the love of a child, has much to do with your life. Those are the apron-strings that bind a man to decency. Some day, my young man, another life may be linked with yours; some day you hope to stand at those crystal gates that open to the pure and holy joys of wedded life; then for love's sweet sake follow the good.

There is a very powerful passage in a work of modern fiction in which a man, who had in youth dwelt in Sodom, tries in vain to win the woman who could and would have loved him had he been the pure man she believed he was.

"You would have loved me, then, if I had lived a different life?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered. "I should have loved you. You were born for me. Why, oh why, did you not live for me?"

"I wish to God I had," he said.

"You always meant to marry," she said. "You treasured in your heart your ideal of a woman. Why could you not have so lived that you would have been her ideal when at last you met her?"

"I wish to God I had," he repeated.

And that was his retribution, the fiery hail that swept over his life and left it seared and sterile. Oh, that the young manhood of this generation might realize that the grandest tether that binds them to decency is the pure love of a good woman! Do not laugh at the devotion of young lovers. Such love may be God's guardian angel, strong as it is fair, and sent, like the white-winged messengers that of old took Lot by the hand, to lead them away from the city of destruction.

> "Indeed, I know
> Of no more subtle master under heaven
> Than is the maiden passion of a maid,
> Not only to keep down the base in man,
> But to teach high thought, and amiable words
> And courtliness, and the desire for fame,
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

Friends, look back over your past tonight, and you will see that, for good or for ill, you owe most, not to some abstract truth, or idea, or principle, but to somebody. The master-forces of life are personal and have steadied many a man on the brink of temptation when the wisest maxims of philosophy and morality would have availed him nothing.

I know a man who had been leading a dissipated life years ago. He suddenly changed his manner of living, stopped drinking, began to work hard, saved his money,

went into business and became comparatively wealthy. The other summer I met him on the street about lunch time one day, and he asked me into his automobile, saying: "You'll break bread with me today." So we went sailing out to his home. On the veranda was an invalid's chair, from which stretched two long, thin arms to greet that man. The poor, hunchbacked girl was settled so low in the pillows that you thought she was an infant, until she was lifted up; but what a face of love was hers! That big man's voice became soft as he whispered: "Papa's treasure." As we passed into the parlor he said: "Father, that poor child has been the making of me. It is seven years ago, when she was ten years old, that I came home one evening, sullen from overdrinking and discouraged with pressing bills. I noticed that she was distressed, and I urged her to tell me what was worrying her. She said: 'Well, papa dear, I've been praying for you all day. I've been asking God to change your heart, and take away the taste for drink. And oh, dear papa, don't be angry, but I have been so afraid you would become a drunkard, and what would happen to your poor, crippled girl then? For I cannot walk and I cannot work. Oh, dear, why did God make me a cripple?' 'To have you love me and make me a good man,' I cried, and from that day I have never touched liquor. I started out to save money in order that my child should never come to want. I can see it all now. My crippled girl is here to keep me straight. I couldn't live without her; she's my guardian angel."

Mother's apronstrings of love tug at your heart, young man. Is your mother still alive? How happy you should

be if she is still in the flesh! Let her use her apron-strings; let her advice be honored. She loves you and her counsel is for your good. Of all advisers, she is the one most interested in your welfare. Your mother may not know the world; she may not be up-to-date; but, my young man, she is your very best friend. The mother hen does not need to know the hawk's nest or fly as high as the sharp-clawed enemy of her brood to warn the chickens when an ominous shadow flits across the barnyard. Your mother need not be familiar with grill-rooms and gambling places to advise you against wicked habits and questionable companions. Do not refuse to allow your mother the sacred right of tying her apronstrings to your heart.

I saw a little, chubby baby-boy tied to his mother's apronstrings one day. It was in front of a little shack, and the young English housewife had tied the wee fellow to the railing in front of the house, giving him about six feet of tether. There he was, with the apronstrings stretched tightly, vainly trying to reach a broken bottle just out of his reach. A little further on was a mud puddle, and still further a flight of hard street steps, over which he might have fallen, if he had been left untied. And I said: "There is a parable: Mother's apronstrings keep us from the broken glass of improper appetites, from the mire of wallowing companionships, and from the precipice of wickedness."

Perhaps your mother's memory is all you have left today. Her hard work, the bread wherewith she fed you, her constant watchfulness, her unceasing kindness, her prayers for your welfare, yea, the prayer she taught you —these holy recollections flit about you this evening like guardian angels.

"If I were hanged on the highest hill,
O mother of mine, O mother of mine,
I know whose prayers would follow me still,
O mother of mine, O mother of mine."

Ah! friends, those apronstrings are strong. They are made of the stoutest material that any loom ever wove. You could almost hitch a team of horses to them, and they would not break. Can a boy forget his mother's prayer? No, and he cannot forget the prayer his mother taught him.

Late one night I asked for a room at the Grand Hotel, Billings, Mont. A large convention was in session there at the time, and there was not a room to be had. I made the round of hotels and finally returned to the Grand and pleaded with the clerk to search again for a vacant bed. He smiled as he asked: "You're Father Vaughan, the lecturer?" "Yes," I answered. "Well, I have a double room on the top floor, but the fellow in the other bed isn't of your kind. He is a pretty stiff proposition—one of the most notorious gamblers of Montana, and I don't reckon you'll mix at all." But I had to sleep somewhere, and I took the room, or at least half of it. My roommate had just entered, and we introduced ourselves and chatted for an hour. He painted himself very black during that time; he let me know that he had no use for churches and clergymen, but that he believed in personal liberty untrammeled by the restrictions of ethical reformers. Then he drifted to other subjects, and I found that we had much in common after all. Finally, preparing for bed, he said: "Now, if you are ready, I'll say my prayers and turn out the light." He almost took my breath away. I waited until the half-minute prayer was finished,

and then asked him how he reconciled his conversation with his prayers. "Well, sir," he said, "I've often wondered at it myself. My dear old mother taught me the prayer I just whispered when I was just able to lisp, and I can't shake off the old habit, though she has been dead a quarter of a century." There was an example of the strength of mother's apronstrings. They still held him; they still kept tugging at his heart. That prayer was the one tie between his innocent past and his dissolute present.

Those apronstrings of mother are long; they stretch across centuries; they reach to the very mouth of hell. How strong is mother's hold on your soul, even now, my boy? Did anyone else ever love you more? Oceans and generations may intervene, but a mother's love is still the same. Friends, can mother's apronstrings be broken? Yes, but you will have to deliberately cut them, and I fear if you sever them, nothing else on earth will hold you.

Simon Legree, a character in the book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," had his last chance offered him when he received a letter stating that his mother, whom he had struck when he left home, was dead; she had forgiven him and had requested that after she was dead a lock of her hair should be sent to her wayward son as a token of her love. Simon tore up the letter with an oath, and, throwing the lock of hair into the fire, exclaimed: "My mother be damned!" And from that day Simon Legree was damned, for his heart grew harder, and his life became more depraved. He had pushed the last chance of goodness from him.

When the son of good parents wilfully severs the apronstrings of his Godly bringing up, he falls even

lower than the children of the religiously indifferent. There is a law of character by which the wickedness of a man is proportioned to the holy influences which he has overcome. Brother-man, those apronstrings are reaching down to you from the skies tonight. Grasp them; hold on to them.

THE IDEAL HOME

THE IDEAL HOME

MY dear friends: I shall go with you tonight to the dearest and most sacred spot on earth, a spot around which cluster the sweetest associations and the most precious memories—Home.

The longer I live, the oftener I visit from home to home, the more I see of the sorrows and cares and the successes and failures of this life, the more I am impressed that the home problem is the greatest problem of any civilization. For the true measure of any civilization is found, not in its legislation or in its architecture; not in its poetry or in its politics; not in its industry or its commerce; not even in its schools or churches, but in the extent to which all of these are made to contribute to the perfection of the family and the glory of the home.

Friends, what are the qualities essential to the ideal home? There cannot be a perfect home without religion. The love of God is the foundation of the home. Jesus Christ made the home; for there never was, and there never could be, an ideal home until Christ came and under the influence of holy Mary was trained in those qualities that make for the beautifying of character. When Christ came to this earth, philosophers were inquiring whether or no all men had souls; some of them thought that all men had souls, and others argued that some men had no souls. It was almost the consensus of opinion that slaves had no souls; and the slaves in Rome, at that day, constituted a large majority of the people. Home, as we

know it, under such a belief was impossible, and so when Jesus Christ came He established the home. The more His gospel is preached over the length and breadth of the earth, the brighter and happier will be the homes of the people. The more we love God and the nearer we go to Him, the higher will our ideal of home become.

Friends, there are virtues which will make home brighter and happier, and without which there cannot be an ideal home. Unselfishness should reign in the home. The home is a government, and it will never be truly successful until every member is thoroughly unselfish. "The house that is divided against itself cannot stand," and there is no wedge that will so surely produce division in the home as selfishness. There is not a sinful soul, there is not a ruined home, there is not a tangled condition of life anywhere that had not as its cause a selfish life. Let the father be careful to never provoke the children to anger; let the children honor the names of father and mother; let the mother be patient with the father and children; then there will be a home characterized by unselfishness and piety. You cannot be selfish and have the blessing of Jesus Christ, for if religion may be defined by one word, the word that best expresses an adequate conception of it is Love.

There are many people who do not like to be demonstrative in the expression of their affection; they may love the other members of the home, but they never indicate it. The expression of affection in the home may be too demonstrative, but it is better to err in this respect than in the concealment of genuine feeling. Love is buried so deep in the hearts of some people that it never rises to the surface. The wife travels through all the days

of her life and never hears her husband give her credit for playing her part so well; the children never receive encouragement, and coldness and deadness are over all. Is it not a sad conception of the life and work of Jesus which would cause us to feel that we ought to wait until we take our place on high and wear the incorruptible crown that is above all price to hear those words: "Well done, good and faithful servant?" We may hear them now—we ought to hear them now. The faithful wife and deserving children should hear words of commendation in the home and be encouraged by them as the days go by.

There is a type of man who is reserved and undemonstrative. He does not wear his heart upon his sleeve; he would be a better man if he were more easily moved. Often beneath his rugged exterior there is the greatest tenderness, but the world would be the better if he were more demonstrative. How much the brother can do to make the sister happy in the home! He will never know until he tries. And how much the sister can do to make the brother happy! Young people would not be so ready to run away from home in the evening if we had co-operation in the household, and if each one would do all that lies in his or her power to add to the comfort and happiness of the others. Christ came to earth to bring gladness. He did not come to bring melancholy, or to make men weep, but to take away sorrow; to change the face of mourning to the face of hope, and the face that had no smile to a face that was illumined with the joy of his salvation. He made the happy home a possibility.

You cannot have an ideal home without sacrifice. Let the brother do what he can for the home. Let him give up some of his pleasures and he will live to be glad that

he was able to help make the home a happy one. It will be a joy to him to think in the days to come, when his step is halting and feeble, that, in the long ago, he made sacrifices for home. It will be your crown of glory in the days to come, young woman, that when you were in the home you gave the best of your life to the others who were there. How many an elder brother, that he might be true to his home, has allowed opportunities to go by, has not joined in the contest for which he longed in the world's great amphitheatre, that the younger lads of the family might have an education; has clung to the home and struggled in poverty to force a living from the rocky or sandy farm that refused to yield a fair return for the labor that was bestowed upon it! How many an elder sister, when the mother died, has refused an offer of honorable marriage from the man she loved, that she might remain in the home and care for the younger and motherless children! The crown that will be placed upon her head in the great world beyond will be of undying glory—a crown of stars whose lustre will never fade.

Attention should be given to the diversity of gifts and the inequalities manifested in the home. The father may go home weary and worried with his work, and possibly not appreciate the difficulties of the young schoolboy, whose mind is not so bright as that of his brothers. There is often in the home lack of appreciation of those who are not so gifted as others. Mary did not appreciate the work of Martha, and Martha did not correctly value the tender ministry of Mary, while both were doing good work. Sometimes the little ones are not praised for the work they do. We should remember to appreciate their diffi-

culties and struggles, their victories and defeats, more than we do.

Obedience is essential to the ideal home. There is, I think, a special call to emphasize the fact that the old-fashioned virtue of honor to parents is lacking in the conduct of the average American home. The age of reverence seems to be gone. Instead of the words "father" and "mother" we often hear the boys and girls of to-day applying to their parents unseemly terms. If children are not taught to reverence their parents, how can anyone expect them to reverence God? The lack of reverence is one of the greatest evils of the age. Children ought to be taught obedience. This is one of the greatest lessons which youth may learn. The child who has never experienced discipline is not likely to succeed in life. After all, men and women, do you know anything more delightful than a sweet, obedient child? Do you know that a child ought to be the joy of the house and of the neighborhood? If a child is mannerly, obedient, you can hardly keep it at home, because the neighbors want to borrow it. They take it over next door and say: "Did you ever see such a sweet baby?" And they take it clear across the street, and say: "Did you ever see such a lovely child? We wish it were ours." An obedient child is a delight, but a disobedient child causes sorrow. A disobedient child will make trouble everywhere he goes. He will mutilate everything he sees. The other day I met such a child; of course he did not live in your city. The mother said: "My son, refrain from whistling in the house." He replied: "Now, you shut up." And she said: "Why, Charlie, you must not speak to mamma that way." Some mothers talk when they ought to work. If you have a

child with no manners, you had better quit talking to him, as talk does not seem appropriate to the occasion. The use of the rod would be more appropriate. Some people have children that need a basting more than a blessing. They need whipping a good deal more than kissing. I am not arguing for chastising children, but I say lots of them need it. It is better to give wholesome correction to your child and have the child obedient than not to give counsel and have him a menace to the whole community.

In many of our public schools we find the lack of the virtue obedience, due largely to the fact that corporal punishment is not permitted. Our school board has evidently failed to realize that legalism is the indispensable means of developing moral character. The result is too common. The large percentage of the robberies, outrages on womanhood and murders in many of our large cities are perpetrated by youths. Let corporal punishment be introduced into our schools and obedience will be developed in the lives of the children and crime will greatly diminish.

Friends, would you have an ideal home? Remember, then, that the home is not merely a house. That is not a successful home where you have three meals a day, a comfortable place in which to sleep, fuel to keep you warm, and nothing more. You can get all that for two dollars a day in a fairly respectable hotel in any town. A house is not always a home, though it may have a brown stone front, and the interior be decorated and gilded, painted and polished in a gorgeous manner. It becomes a home by reason of the feeling that is in the hearts of those who live in it. It is the bond that unites that makes the dwellers in a house a family.

Let there be humor in the home. Let there be joy over the little mishaps and accidents that occur. These will always happen, even in the best regulated families. If it were not for these little occurrences, what would our homes be like? Let them help to make home joyful; let them help to deepen its affections; then the children will look back upon home as a place of gladness, peace and sunshine. In after days, though the young man cannot go back to it, the knowledge that the home is there will lighten his burden, for many a young man has been encouraged and has started anew in life's race when he has thought of the old home, and the father, mother, brothers and sisters dwelling peacefully in the sunshine of its affection.

"My boy, thou wilt dream that the world is fair,
And thy spirit will sigh to roam;
And thou must go; but never, when there,
Forget the light of home."

Let there be amusements in the home. Find something that will amuse, and have it in your home. Life is dull and dreary unless you have amusements of some kind, and fathers and mothers should know that what amuses them may not be entertainment for the children.

Have music in the home. Music is blessed because it is a peacemaker. It is like the "soft answer that turneth away wrath." Was it the absence in the home of the laughter of children that directed Jubal's thoughts to the inventing and perfecting of the harp and organ? The Bible does not say that he had children other than his successors in his profession of melody. Friends, have music in the house. Songs are the jewels which the church has worn—the pearls, diamonds and precious stones

formed into amulets more potent against sorrow and sadness than the most famous charms of wizard and magician. Song is an expression of joy. A bird has lost its carol when there is no music of happiness in its heart, and a man really sings only when he is in good humor. Song has enlivened every circumstance of trial and danger. Mahomet told his wife, Ayesha, to instruct his warriors in a native air of wild melody, and in its captive beauty they overwhelmed the enemies of the Moslem; there was no arm to stay their fury when its spirit buoyed them above a sense of danger. The legions of Napoleon were once imbedded in the snowy Alps. The atmosphere was cold and crisp, the wind howled, and far beyond and over still greater obstacles lay sunny Italy. "Play the French Gloria," shouted the indomitable leader to the band of the discouraged and fainting troops; and down the lines of that frozen cohort rushed warm liquid melody. The disheartened men were born anew, and the snow-clad Alps seemed small as molehills. How beautifully does Robert Browning sing of the effect of sweet sounds:

> "My heart! they loose my heart, those simple words,
> Its darkness passes, which naught elsè could touch;
> Like some dank snake, that forces may not expel,
> Which glideth out to music sweet and low."

Alfred Tennyson, in "The Lady of Shalott," pictures the power of music in the last hour. As the boatman moved along, those on shore

> "Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
> Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
> Till her blood was frozen slowly,
> And her eyes were darkened wholly,
> Turned to tower'd Camelot.

For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water side,
Singing in her song she died,
The lady of Shalott.''

A young lad who was beginning the study of Latin took from the shelf the old Latin dictionary that had been the property of the eldest brother and had at last come to the youngest. When at this later day the book was opened there fluttered forth a scrap of newspaper, yellow with age, and on it was printed Oliver Wendell Holmes' poem, ''The Opening of the Piano.'' When the lad, forgetting his Latin, examined the poem, this is what he read:

''In the little southern parlor of the house you may have seen,
With the gambrel roof, and the gable looking westward to the green;
At the side toward the sunset, with the window on its right,
Stood the London-made piano I am dreaming of tonight!

''Ah me! how I remember the evening when it came!
What a cry of eager voices, what a group of cheeks in flame,
When the wondrous box was opened that had come from o'er the seas,
With its smell of mastic varnish and its flash of ivory keys!

''Then the children all grew fretful in the restlessness of joy;
For the boy would push his sister, and the sister crowd the boy,
Till the father asked for quiet, in his grave paternal way;
But the mother hushed the tumult with the words, 'Now, Mary, play,'

''For the dear soul knew that music was a very sovereign balm;
She had sprinkled it o'er sorrow and seen its brow grow calm,
In the days of slender harpsichords with tapping, tinkling quills,
Or caroling to her spinet with its thin metallic thrills.

''So Mary, the household minstrel, who always loved to please,
Sat down to the new 'Clementi,' and struck the glittering keys;
Hushed were the children's voices, and every eye grew dim,
As, floating from lip and finger, arose the 'Vesper Hymn'.''

These words teach a useful lesson. You will have a happier home if you have music in it. If your ear can not be tuned to music you are missing much in life. Have music in the home; life will be the sweeter and the happier for it.

Above all, have religion in the home; for if the romance that gathers about a home at its beginning should fade away—and it may become less—the sweet influence of religion will never leave you. Set up an altar in the home, and let the fire upon it never go out. The Godless home cannot be a happy one.

If your home be consecrated, it will be the brighter for it. Consecration is always good. It is good whether it be the consecration in the life of the Christian blacksmith at the smithy, with the bellows blowing, and the sparks flying to the dusty roof; the consecration of the toiler who goes to his day's work in hodden-gray; the consecration of the statesman who sees his reward in the gratitude in a nation's eyes, or the consecration of the man who gives his life to elevate humanity and free men from the degradation of sin. Have consecration, and let it color the life of the home. It will sanctify all that you do, and the grace of a high and noble purpose will follow you through life. Perhaps you may not understand your life, if it be consecrated, and you may not know when you are being led. You may seem to be losing life, but in reality you are finding it. What seems lost is often found again in a more glorious form. Somewhere there is a picture of the ultimate gain which follows the apparent loss in a consecrated life. Go to the mountain side and see the tall trees waving their branches to the sky and making music in the wind; hear the birds singing and the

little brook making melody as it runs; and you say, "Here is music—the music that I long to hear." The lumberman comes, the trees fall, the birds fly away, the little brook dries up; and you say: "The music is gone." Go down the valley to the large factory, for civilization has been marching through the once unpopulated lands, and you hear the screech of the plane, the grate of the saw, and the clang of the hammer; you smell again the balsam and the pine, but you say: "There is no music." They tell you they are making a great organ for the cathedral in the city. You enter the great cathedral and there falls upon your ears that awe which is felt on entering the great cathedrals of the old land. The organ plays, the music falls, rises and swells through the pillared aisles and lofty vault, and you hear again the rippling water, the singing of the birds, and the music of the wind in the branches. You have found the music again and you say it is better, for the music has been consecrated and is leading in praise a thousand worshipping hearts. It seems brighter and sweeter than before. This is the picture that someone has painted of the truth that loss is sometimes gain. Have your homes filled with the melody of Christian living, and have life consecrated to a high and noble purpose.

Woman has the greatest power in the home, as in the world. Her influence is almost supreme.

"The hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world."

This is what George Macdonald, the novelist, the preacher and the man thinks of woman's sphere:

"In regard to one of the vexed questions of the day—

the rights of woman—it seems to me that what women demand it is not for men to withhold. It is not their business to lay down the law for women; that women must lay down for themselves. I confess that, although I must herein seem to many old-fashioned and conservative, I should not like to see any woman I cared much for either in parliament or in an anatomical room; but, on the other hand, I feel that woman must be left free to settle that matter. If it is not good, good women will find it out and recoil from it. If it is good, then God give them speed. One thing they have a right to—a far wider and more valuable education than they have been in the habit of receiving. When the mothers are well taught, the generations will grow in knowledge at a fourfold rate. But still the teaching of life is better than all the schools, and common sense than all learning. This common sense is a rare gift, scantier in none than in those who lay claim to it on the ground of following commonplace, worldly and prudential maxims."

The expression "Christian worker" is a misnomer. Is not the man who works at home, cares for the home, and labors that piety may be in the home, a Christian worker? Is not the mother who brings up her little ones in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as worthy to receive the title of Christian worker as a Bible woman who travels about the community doing good? Surely, in God's sight, these are Christian workers. Great honor is due to the mother whose field of service is the pious home, even if her name is not on the roll of any committee; and great honor is due to the man—the Godly father in a pious home, though he cannot be active in the municipal life of his city.

"Methought that in a solemn church I stood;
Its marble acres, worn with knees and feet,
Lay spread from door to door, from street to street;
Midway, the form hung high upon the rood,
Of Him who gave His life to be our good;
Beyond, priests flitted, bowed and murmured meet;
Among the candles shining, still and sweet,
Men came and went and worshipped as they could,
And still their dust a woman with her broom,
Bowed to her work, keep sweeping to the door.

"Then saw I, slow, through all the pillared gloom,'
Across the church a silent figure come;
'Daughter,' it said, 'thou sweepest well my floor.'
'It is the Lord!' I cried, and saw no more."

Friends, what more can be said about the home? Good homes will protect the state and make fewer prisons. Wealth will not make but may mar the home. "The greatest man in history was the poorest." These are Emerson's words. Genius dwells with frugality and labor, and more than once it has lived with poverty.

Extravagance is an enemy to the home. No man is rich whose expenditures exceed his means, and no man is poor whose incomings exceed his outgoings.

We value that which endures. Not the freshet in the springtime, but the perennial stream. We do not rely for our guidance upon the candle's dying flare, but on the light of the sun. Home is of more value than society's empty honors. The smile of society is for an hour; the joy of home is forever.

THE YOUNG WOMAN IN THE HOME

MY dear friends: Physical culture is an important subject for the consideration of the youth of today. Our educators are teaching our young men the importance of perfect physical development. If it be necessary to call the attention of young men to this fact, it is more important to direct the attention of young women to it. The modern young woman seems less inclined than the young man to direct her attention to athletics. Too frequently she seems to think that to possess a strong and well developed body savors of the masculine. Weakness, however, is no recommendation for young women. God did not give the body, which is the palace of the soul, without intending that it should be as serviceable as it may possibly be made. Abstract truth accomplishes little in this world, and theory is of slight avail if there be no strong personality behind to impress and to control.

A young woman may be attractive in mind and heart, but she will be far more attractive if she has a strong personality which will favorably impress the people with whom she comes in contact. Personality depends, to a great degree, upon physical culture. That was a great truth uttered by a great man: "Truth is indeed the arrow, but man is the bowstring which sends it home;" and when he spoke of man, he meant the race, and not man as distinguished from woman. Therefore, young woman, do not court weakness, for it will not help you to do your work better or aid you in the service of

God. God requires you to have strength, so that, if need be, you may be able to accomplish great things for Him, for your sex, and for the race.

Those who have accomplished the great things in life have been generally of strong frame and great toilers: so, young woman, do not be afraid of work. Carlyle said: "The true hero is the man who knows his work and does it," and that standard of heroism applies to women as truly as to men. You will not be less attractive if you are able to toil. Do not be ashamed, if need be to become a servant in some respectable home. The Master, whose teachings are always the best, said: "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life as a ransom for many."

It is difficult to understand why any young woman should be despised because she is a servant in some respectable home, for she who does her duty honestly in this position does a great deal for the welfare of the race—much more than is done by the young woman who leads a dilettante life. Do not be ashamed if your work be in the kitchen, for the parlor will be of little value without the kitchen.

It is not pleasant to hear people speak in a foolish and invidious way about the distinctions of society, as if a young woman who works as a servant in the home is not to be respected in the world. Who are they who hold high places in life? Are they not those who have come from the soil and from the ranks of the people? Who are they who are on the down-grade in life? Are they not the sons and daughters of men who, a genera-

tion ago, held their heads high in the world? Adversity has always been the best university in the world, and it must always be the condition that affords the best training for young people, whether men or women.

You have a broader life, young woman, than your brothers. What of the man who stands behind a machine in a factory? His work from day to day is to attend to that machine, and he has nothing to do but attend to it. Compare him with a farmer whose work is in the fields, under the blue skies, and who daily hears the great voices of nature about him. Which is likely to make the greater man? The one has the inspiration of nature all about him and will become an educated man—not, perhaps, according to the theories of the professors, but you must remember that there are various kinds of education. There are no schools like the blue skies, the green fields, the beautiful woods, and the flashing brooks.

> "And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks;
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

You have a broader life in the home than those whose life is a dull routine in the world of business. You have more sympathy because you have more appeals to sympathy. There is a variety in your work and an education in the home, while often your brothers and fathers have to toil at work that has little variety in it.

There are two ways open, fortunately or unfortunately, for you. While your brother has to prepare for only one life, you have to prepare for two. You may have one, or perhaps you may have the other, and they

are as wide apart as the poles. If a young woman marry, she has one kind of life, and if she remain single she has another kind of life. How widely they differ! Young women have to prepare for both. There have been unmarried women who have been marvelously useful in the world; and the woman who remains in single life, that she may do more for her sex and for the race, we honor, for with her life of devotion she is of great benefit to the world. But there is the other way of life, and it is undoubtedly intended that the daughters in our homes should become mothers in their own. The home is a sacred institution. God made it, and the young woman is wise who, in this matter, has a right view of life and not a foolish and sentimental one. She will prepare herself for the duties that will, in all probability, be hers in the future, and she will make herself intelligent in order that she may properly care for the home. Blessed is the daughter whose mother is a woman of God and who teaches her child to properly take charge of a home. Life will run smoothly in the home when the mother and father have prepared themselves for the work that will fall to their lot. How can a young woman expect a happy life if, having made a solemn contract to take charge of a home, she is found utterly wanting in its administration? She begins her married life with a lie, for she pledges herself that she is able to take charge of a home—and that is one of the most solemn contracts ever made this side of heaven. Prepare for both spheres of life, young woman. It may seem unfortunate for you to have to prepare for both, but we are not speaking of what ought to be, but of what is.

Friends, there are virtues which every young woman

should enshrine in her heart that she may successfully perform her duty in life. What are those virtues? Every young woman should be true to whatever she undertakes. Remember that God never intended you to treat the most solemn things of life as if they were trivial. Never trifle with the heart's affections—the greatest and deepest feelings that we have in life. Houses and lots are small in value when compared with the worth of a human soul. Never allow a young man to think you care for him unless you really do. Deceive him not, for God will hold you responsible and will call you before the great white throne to answer for your treatment of him. Be honest, be true, and do what is right in the sight of God. There is too much trifling in matters of the heart. There have been hearts broken, lives ruined and souls lost by the seductive smiles of a fickle woman. Daughters, if you would be virtuous in the sight of God, remember that God never intended you to use the power which you have to work the downfall of any young man. What is virtue? How can we say that any young woman is virtuous who will trifle with a human soul? Be careful in this matter; you have the greater power, and therefore the greater responsibility. There is a judgment day coming, and not only so, but there is a judgment in operation now, and every day is doomsday.

Never marry a man unless you love him, and do not marry him merely because you love him. Love is like a wild vine that will cling alike to Corinthian pillar or rotten wood. Love is not the true test. Inquire first of all whether the young man who seeks your hand is worthy of your love. Never marry for money. You will

have what you have bargained for while the money lasts, but, after it is gone, what will you have left? A man for whom you do not care, to whom you are to be tied all the days of your life; and life will seem long—long as eternity to you—if you love him not. What avail to you, when the money goes, is this unworthy man? Remember that marriage is the most solemn and the greatest contract ever made. The going forth of a young woman from her father's home to that which is to be hers for life, is no trifling matter. The marriage ceremony for the sympathetic priest is often more solemn than the burial service, for, while death always draws upon the sympathy of the priest who is true to duty and loves God and cares for humanity, and while there is always a nervous strain in going into the house of mourning, marriage draws upon his sympathy more and is often a more difficult duty to perform.

Think of two young people, a young man and a young woman, plighting their troth and going down through the valley of life, not agreeing, because not loving, spreading ruin and spiritual death all about them, and say if marriage is not a solemn and momentous ceremony. Do not marry a young man who endangers his life because he loves pleasure. Do not marry a man with the hope of reforming him. Do not marry a man until you know that he is a good man, until you know that he loves his fellowman and fears God. Be careful, young woman. Watch and pray. Learn much about the world, its society and opportunities, that you may not be deceived, robbed and destroyed when you go out into it. Be watchful, for you might as well send a canoe into

stormy waters, in which a frigate would be in danger, as to go into society unprepared.

While on your guard against an evil world, be charitable to those who have suffered. You are to be mistress of a home, and it may be your privilege to have little children growing up around you. Have charity for their sakes. Have charity for mankind; the world needs it. There are too many hard hearts in the world, and it needs that love "that suffereth long and is kind."

Ah, my young friends, truth is the foundation of every noble character. To be true—not merely in your relation to the opposite sex but in every relationship of life—is a glorious virtue. Truth is to womanhood what temper is to the sword, what purity is to gold. Of all sins untruthfulness is the most contemptible. Lying is the mother of cunning, of meanness, of almost every vice. Every young woman should recognize that a lie is the most cowardly sin she can commit. I should infinitely rather meet you twenty years hence, all in rags and tatters, and know that you told the truth, than find you clothed in satins and silks, but devoid of truth. Young woman, remember that a full purse is a poor exchange for a truthful character, a stainless conscience. Hate the gospel of shoddy. Place your foot firmly on the line of absolute truthfulness and dare the world to persuade you to cross that line.

Young woman, you will do well to remember that the most lasting beauty is not the beauty of face and form. One of the greatest men of France, a most attractive man, had, perhaps, the ugliest face in that fair land; but he was an orator, and when with his inimitable eloquence he inspired men and made their blood run as liquid fire,

men said that his face shone and that he was beautiful. Beauty depends largely upon intelligence. Intelligence is indispensable to beauty. You will never be beautiful if your mind is a blank, and you can overcome defects of form or face by cultivating beauty of soul. Prefer to be praised for your intelligence rather than for your physical beauty. Remember that while physical beauty fades, soul-beauty goes on to the end of life. Make yourself attractive in soul-beauty. There is no greater beauty in life. Friends, there is not enough real beauty in this old world. The earth is longing and sighing for it, and it is the privilege of every young woman, by charity and kindness of heart, to shed a radiant influence through the dark ways of life; to make the world more beautiful, and to gladden and make green life's dreary paths.

"A sacred burden is the life ye bear;
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly;
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly;
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But forward, upward, till the goal ye win."

A woman may be a great power for good in the world; but she also may be a great power for evil, and great wrongs have actually been wrought by her.

"What mighty ills have not been done by woman?
Who was't betrayed the Capitol? A woman.
Who was the cause of a long ten-years' war
And laid at last old Troy in ashes? A woman."

While on her guard against an evil world, every true woman should acquire a knowledge of business, and if she has never been taught the ways of a business life she ought to make haste to learn. You may have a happy home and can say truly that your cup is running over,

but bereavement may bring a change. Perhaps all that will be left you will be an insurance policy, and if you do not know anything about the investment of money you will be in a helpless condition. Too often the familiar friend, whose advice is sought, proves to be a broken reed. Perhaps some executor has been appointed whose stupidity brings ruin. All these difficulties are placed in the way of a woman when she is least able to bear them. Nansen was not more daring when he started in the Fram to make his way through the icy sea to seek the pole, than the woman who, when bereft of the protection of her best friend and with the charge of little children, sets her face toward the cold and uncompromising future. Every young woman should acquire a knowledge of business methods, so that if her day of trial comes she will be able to meet the difficulties which may be presented.

Every true woman should learn economy. Our fathers began married life in a small cottage with oatmeal and milk, but after years of industry they now live in a brown-stone front. The young people of our day begin with a brown-stone front, but soon end in a flat. The curse of America is the craze of young people with small salaries who are endeavoring to live like millionaires. Better to bed supperless than to rise in debt; better to eat off porcelain till you can pay for Haviland; better to eat potato soup until you afford turtle; better to drink water until you can pay cash for milk. No woman can be happy who owes someone for everything that she has. How can a woman be at peace, knowing that she is wearing another person's clothes, eating

another person's food, warming herself at another person's fireside?

What should be said about the new woman? It will not profit to discuss her at great length. There are two kinds of new woman. If you mean by that expression one who consecrates her life to the elevation of her sex or of the race, you have a noble woman. If you mean the spurious kind of woman, who cares not so much that she be a benefit to the race as that she makes people feel that she is the new woman, you will have a woman who is really to be despised, for she will help nobody and will render the world the greatest benefit by leaving it. All honor to the women who are seeking to elevate themselves to the place in the world which they ought to have. All honor to them; but not to those who are filled with a desire to be thought peculiar—to be called the new woman—for the sphere they seek is filled with folly and a desire for notoriety.

Young woman, you are the last work of creation; you have been called God's masterpiece. Have religion. It is better far that the husband love not the Lord than that the mother be irreligious. It is better for the children, for the mother has more influence with the children. How can a woman undertake the responsibility of a home, how can she take charge of the souls that God may entrust to her, if she know not the Lord and care not for humanity? In her course through life she will be like some fiery demon going through the fruitful earth, scattering sparks of destruction all over the fields of yellow corn. Better far that she should remain single for life than to undertake the care of a home, not having that love for souls which will enable her to bring up, in

the fear of God, the children entrusted to her care. Do not undertake the management of a home if you are not qualified; there is fraud in the contract. In the home:

"Be a breeze from the mountain height;
Be a fountain of pure delight;
Be a star serene,
Shining clear and keen
Through the darkness and dread of the night.
Be something holy and helpful and bright—
Be the best you can with all your might."

THE YOUNG MAN IN THE HOME

MY dear friends: I am glad to have this opportunity to address this large audience of Christian young men, and I assure you that I shall be practical rather than critical in our discussion of "The Young Man in the Home."

Home! How shall I describe it? The difficulty is greater than it first appears. The scenes and circumstances comprehended in that simple and familiar word are so diversified that we find ourselves perplexed in no small degree when we come to attempt a definition. The external circumstances are immeasurably varied. There are homes of granite and marble, as well as of the most worthless and perishable material. There are mansions upon which wealth has exhausted its resources, and there are shanties that have been thrown together after the most flimsy fashion to serve the purpose of human habitation. There are dwellings in which luxuries abound, and there are those in which poverty has enthroned itself in all the naked majesty of desolation.

But home is not built of granite or marble, of brick or wood. It is not dependent for its existence and fascination upon any of those features which appeal to the physical perception. The elements which enter into its construction are such as cannot be measured with line and plummet, or valued by algebraic calculations. It is an ethereal habitation, built by the invisible fingers of affection. The palace and the cottage are not so far removed as we often think. The humblest dwelling may be a fairer home than the most costly mansion that genius ever reared. "Be it ever so humble there's no place like home." Where love and sympathy have woven their canopy over human lives, the heart centers itself as surely as the planets in their sphere. Where human souls are intertwined from earliest infancy to manhood's prime in the sweet confidences of mutual interest and affection, neither time nor vicissitude, nor the fascination of a thousand luxuriant experiences, can break the spell.

Go where you will in search of beauty, variety or pleasure; cross the wide-sweeping waters of the sea and wander through all the avenues of gorgeous magnificence in lands far distant and renowned; go where tropical affluence abounds, or where "the moon sleeps in full-orbed radiance on the crystal icebergs;" go where vineyards are ripening under mellowing sunshine, or where the wild torrents leap and nature presents herself in her most august and fascinating forms, and amid it all your thoughts will sometimes wander to a scene, it may be without a single attractive feature as far as external beauty is concerned, and you will say with undissembling fervency:

"There is one land of every land the pride,
Beloved of heaven o'er all the world beside;
There is one spot of earth supremely blessed,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest;
Say wouldst thou ask where shall that spot be found?
Art thou a man—a patriot—look around?
Still shalt thou find where'er thy footsteps roam
That land, thy country, and that spot, thy home."

There are three kinds of homes in which the young men of this republic are being nurtured: The religious, the irreligious, and the ideal. They will probably include all the varieties which I need mention in this address.

1. The Religious.—Joseph's home was what I would call the religious home, insofar as the recognition of the true God was concerned. There can be no doubt that there was attention given to parental instruction. There was none of the refinement and intellectual discipline which are common in the best American households today; there were neither books nor educational facilities. The patriarchs themselves were the rugged children of nature. All the culture they had came from communion with the Unseen. They had traditions which were sacred, and hopes which were sublime, and these they never failed to instil into the minds of their children with assiduous care. Jacob, you may be well assured, gave to the youthful Joseph—the elder son of his beloved Rachael—the benefit of all the higher knowledge he had acquired. Joseph's after life bore abundant witness to the fidelity with which the fundamental principle of faith and conduct were instilled into his useful mind. Illiterate as Joseph must have been, as compared with the youth of the present day, he had an education of heart and conscience which the best might envy. There was much in that patriarchal family life which cannot fail to indi-

cate that the instruction and discipline were not as thorough as they might have been. There were twelve sons, and of these ten were rough, rude men of coarse manners and indifferent character. Much of the superiority which was exhibited in Joseph must have been inborn. He had a noble nature with a quick and ready mind, and a heart receptive of the higher culture even under circumstances which, under the light of the facilities which present themselves to the young men of today, must be considered adverse. It is vastly to his credit that he came out from such a home with such sterling qualities of heart and head.

The home-life of the present day is not always as helpful in the development of young Christian character as it might be. There are numerous instances in which young men learn to despise the religion of their parents, because they see such a poor exemplification of it in their lives. A Christian household without prayer, without religious instruction, without reverence for sacred things, is a sad anomaly. The home where the whole of the professed Christianity expends itself in a mere outward show of godliness; where the energies and enthusiasm of the soul are given to business and pleasure, and the mere vapidity to Christ; where pride, frivolity and worldliness are permitted to crowd out all serious reflection and all earnest, conscientious sensibility, is a terribly hard soil for the very best quality of nature to acquire stability. Let us remember it needs not actual fraud or lies to make home profane. Vulgar views of life, forgetfulness of God, purely material ambitions for the children, or querulousness and discontent or religious "gush" and cant—these make profane homes. A child's

character has as little chance in them as Esau's had beneath Rebekah's tent.

Parents are often much surprised that their children should have so little affection for sacred things; that they should be so easily led away into irreligion and sometimes into rationalism and infidelity. But is there not a cause? If our home-life were the genuine and regnant thing it ought to be; if parents did all their duty toward children; if they instilled into their minds and hearts the principles of Christianity and set before them examples of sublime consistency, we would soon see a better type of American manhood.

There are two extreme tendencies which are to be deprecated in the conduct of a household. The first is excessive leniency, the second undue severity. A great many children are spoiled by too much indulgence. They are pampered into weakness; their manly qualities are almost entirely obliterated by injudicious manipulations; they are made irritable and unhappy by the unwisdom of love. If Joseph had not been made of sterling stuff he would have been spoiled by the injudicious fondness which was lavished upon him by his doting parents. It was a good and wise Providence that called him away from a home where such a possibility was almost certain, and threw him while yet a tender youth, in the circumstances of extreme vicissitude to save him for the higher destiny to which he had been called.

The policy of extreme severity is also, in the main, defective. The repression of all the exuberant buoyancy of the young heart has little in it to command approval. The restrictions and impositions with which religion is sometimes associated in the youthful mind cause a recoil

of antipathy which is seldom afterwards overcome. I have known instances where the reins were held too tightly, only to eventuate in the most ungovernable libertinism of belief and life. What we call the religious home is not always the most helpful in the development of character. The advantages which are enjoyed by the rising youth in our land are great indeed, but there are counteracting influences at work too often, even where hearts are honest and purposes sincere.

2. The Irreligious.—It must be admitted that there are homes, where there are no religious professions made, which are scenes of quiet beauty, of sweet and kindly affection—of all those delicate ministries which heighten the joys and soften the asperities of life. The principles of Christianity are often apparent where its authority is not recognized. Men little know how much they are indebted to the Christ for the sweetest influences that play around them. The fact that God is not worshipped does not make a home in the strictest sense irreligious, for Christianity has stolen into our civilization and permeated our moral, intellectual and social being with its quickening and beautifying inspirations.

But there are homes which are emphatically irreligious, not merely in profession but in character. They breathe the pestilence that wasteth at noon-day. They are the very hot beds of infamy; they lack all the essential qualities of purity and excellence. Those who grow up in them are not merely tainted but saturated with a pollution which permeates every fibre of their being. We often censure when we should commend, and condemn when we should pity. There are young men growing up around us who have been steeped in infamy

and lewdness from their very infancy; they have grown up in an atmosphere that set forth its pestilential effluvia on all sides. It is only a miracle that can redeem them from the awful degradation into which they have been precipitated by inevitable circumstances. Alas, for the young man whose earlier years are spent under such conditions. A plant or flower might grow without light or warmth almost as easily as such a soul to open its bosom towards the heavens.

3. The Ideal.—I have in my mind a conception of what a Christian home should be. Whether it has ever been realized I know not. Happy, thrice happy the youth who has enjoyed its blessings, for they could not fail to have influenced his character and enriched his life. There it stands in the crowded streets of a city, or in the quiet country. The situation matters little, for its real glory is within. The parents have grown into each other's affections and confidences under the sweet influences of our Christ, through many happy years. When they plighted their vows at the marriage altar the benediction of a fatherly God rested upon them; their domestic life has been one growing scene of happy burden-bearing. Bright, joyous, hopeful, and yet faithful to every trust imposed upon them, they have moved along in mutual helpfulness and appreciation. The husband, now in the prime of manhood, is of majestic bearing, with benignant eye and graceful features—the very embodiment of manly beauty. The children look up to him with trustful confidence and affection; they have never feared him, and his presence, even at their wildest sports, has only added to their joy; their young hearts beat with a manly pride as they call him "father,"

for he is wise and good as well as strong, and there is not a neighbor but appreciates his worth. The mother has a sweet and confiding countenance in which rare intelligence shines out amid a halo of tenderest affection. They form a pair that seem by nature to have been fashioned for each other's joy. An evening spent beneath that God-blest roof is like a snatch of the unblighted Eden. Every child's peculiar taste is marked and met. They have their studies and amusements; their hours of work and play. They are taught to love the beautiful and do the right in such a fascinating way that, like the flowers in spring-time that open 'neath the sunlight's gentle glow, they move with easy footsteps into the royal pathway that leads to God and heaven. Such is the ideal home. Would to God it were more common in this dark and blighted world.

Friends, before I discuss the virtues which every young man should manifest in the home, I would fain say a few words on the influence of the home on life. Who shall ever measure it? Either for good or evil, weal or woe, it is potential. Friends, the soul is affected by its environment as certainly as is the delicate exotic by the atmospheric conditions which surround it. Disposition, character and destiny are often determined before an individual emerges into manhood. Those are years of infinite momentousness when the mind is plastic and the heart is young. We shall never fully know, until the day shall declare it, how much we have been affected by those influences which played around our lives in childhood and youth. The instances are rare where distinguished saintliness and wide-reaching spiritual activities have marked the history of those whose early

years were untouched by the higher inspirations. The most potent energies society has ever known have come out of the home-life of the good homes of the land.

Perhaps there are young men here tonight whose homes have exercised no helpful influence upon their lives. You may have little in retrospect that you can think about with gratitude. If you are moral and virtuous, it has been in spite of circumstances that might have well borne you down into the lowest depths of infamy. All the reminiscences of your earlier years are humiliating and sad. It is a miracle, when you come to think of it, that your slender craft did not strike with fatal consequences upon the jagged rocks of parental example ere you had moved out into the open waters of your youth. You feel this moment the deleterious effects of those influences that surrounded you. I thank God that you have been preserved from the tidal current of moral desolation that has swept so many, born and bred as you were, into the howling whirlpool of perdition. Let me assure you, my young friends, of my profoundest sympathy; and what is more, and better far, let me tell you here tonight, that God's pitying eye is upon you. That in the measure that you have been held down by circumstances; in the measure that you have been weakened by your associations; in the measure that you are needy and dependent and sorrowful, you are the object of His divine compassion. As in the family the parental eye turns with the tenderness of eager solicitude toward the child that has become diseased or crippled, even so the great Heavenly Parent turns toward you with all the yearnings of His love. It is His will to pour into your disabled life a power that will lift you above the inimical

conditions of your life and make you a signal trophy of His divine care. Some of the brightest gems that sparkle in Christ's crown were brought up out of the reeking cesspools of the world's iniquity.

There are young men here, also, whose homes have been the very vestibules of heaven. Your earliest recollections are associated with the gentle ministries of loving hearts. Before you had learned the meaning of language your lips had joined in the songs of the pure; no garden ever offered more abundant facilities for the unfolding of a flower than your home did for the development of your soul toward purity and God. There never was a sunnier spot in all the earth than that to which you look back tonight with longing reminiscences. It was so far up upon the mount of consecrated living that the first beams of morning smiled upon it while yet the surrounding valleys were in darkness, and their warm glow lingered long before they illumined the heavens with the effulgence of their fond good night. You can never forget that God-blest, heaven-protected scene, while memory lasts. It was to you

> "The charmed resort
> Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where
> Supporting and supported, delightful friends
> And dear relatives mingled into bliss."

Friends, why have I been so long in picturing these different types of homes before discussing the particular theme: "The Young Man in the Home?" Why? Because the foundation of character is laid in the home. The home is the place for training our youth. Impressions made upon the character of the youth usually continue to old age. Home for the young man is often

like the drydock for the ship. As the ship is laid up for repairs after the stress of the storm, so the young man often returns to the home after having been buffeted by the waves of life's sea—that he may have an interval of rest and go forth with renewed vigor. The home is the best place for training a young man for the storms of life; if he does not there build his character for the storms which are sure to meet him, shipwreck is inevitable. To see a strong ship proudly making her way through a storm is a noble sight.

> "The pulses of her iron heart
> Go beating through the storm."

It is most inspiring to see a great and strong man who has been reared in a Godly home making his way through trials and temptations and journeying safely to the end of life.

Before leaving home a young man should attain to the highest degree of physical culture. It is well to train the mind, but the mind will accomplish little unless it is supported by a strong frame. Every young man should make his body capable of great toil; he should prepare for life's emergencies. Very many men break down in middle life because they have never developed their bodies. When Cicero was unable to do work on account of dyspepsia, he did not relax his efforts after consulting the physician, but he journeyed to Greece and spent a long time in the gymnasium. When he returned to Rome he was a greater man than ever before, and drove out Cataline with the fire of his genius. The young man should take out of his body all the toil of which he is

capable and not bury his talents, remembering ever that ability to toil is one of the greatest.

A young man should read at home. Of course he should discriminate in his reading. There are some books which he must shun, and there are other books which he should read many times. Probably there is no book which is so likely to make a young man wise in the affairs of business as the book of Proverbs. It is well to read it by itself; it is full of searching questions; it contains the clearest and wisest advice. It is perhaps not extravagant to say that it is the sum of all wisdom.

The young man will do well to learn something that will enable him to make a living. If he venture out into the world, unable to provide for himself, society will give him scant sympathy and less substantial help. When he is learning an occupation he will do well to read the books which have a bearing on his chosen profession. If a young man would be a bank clerk, he should spend his leisure time in reading the books which will give him information upon the business of banking. If he be employed upon the railroad he will, if he be wise, not waste his leisure time, but use it to acquire a thorough knowledge of the system of railroading. This is an age of specialists, and he who would succeed must endeavor to know more about his business than his competitor.

Every young man should be courteous in the home. This virtue springs from the heart, and is difficult or impossible to acquire until a feeling of good-fellowship and brotherly kindness dwells in the heart. It does not cost anything to be courteous, but it gains much for a young man. Courtesy prevents friction, oils the busy wheels of life, and makes business run easily and often

successfully. Especially should a young man be courteous to his mother, who is the uncrowned queen of the home. The manliest men on record are the men who respected their mothers most. Jesus was a man to His Mother Mary.

That which Daniel Webster had to say about his parents is worthy of the attention of everyone: "It did not happen to me to be born in a log-cabin, but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log-cabin, raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney and curled over the frozen hills, there was no familiar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist, and I make it an annual visit; I carry my children to it to teach them the hardships endured by the generations gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now among the living, and if ever I am ashamed of it, if ever I fail in affectionate veneration for him who reared and defended it against savage violence and destruction, who cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof and through the fire and blood of seven years' revolutionary war shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice to serve his country and raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted forever from the memory of mankind." A visitor to Webster's house stated that he found, amid portraits of eminent statesmen, a picture of Webster's

mother. Under this picture there were written the words: "My Honored Mother," and beneath the words were the initials: "D. W."

One recalls with pleasure the tribute which Theodore Parker paid to motherhood in his discourse on Daniel Webster: "When virtue leaps high in the public fountain, you seek for the lofty spring of nobleness and find it far off in the dear breast of some mother, who melted the snows of winter and condensed the summer's dew into fair, sweet humanity which now gladdens the face of man in all the city streets."

Beautiful was the utterance of Henry Ward Beecher in regard to his mother, who died when that great orator was a child: "I have only such a remembrance of her as you have of the clouds of ten years ago—faint, evanescent, and yet caught by imagination and fed by that which I have heard of her, and by what my father's thoughts and feelings of her were. It has come to be so much to me that no Christian ever saw so much in the Virgin Mary as I have seen in my mother, who has been a presence to me ever since I can remember."

Friends, remember that you can have but one mother. You may have many friends; you may have a wife who may take the place of another, but when the mother is gone her place can never be taken by all the friends of earth. Therefore, be courteous to mother, giving her the flowers now rather than place them later upon her casket.

Every young man will find that patience is a noble virtue at all times. I remember reading of a young clergyman who, in arranging his toilet for his parochial calls, found a button gone from his shirt collar, and all

at once the good man's patience left him. He fretted and scolded and said undignified and unkind things, until his tired mother burst into tears and escaped to her room. The hours of the afternoon wore away, during which this young clergyman called upon old Brother Jones, who was all bowed down with rheumatism, and found him patient and even cheerful; he called upon young Brother Hall, wasting away from consumption, and found him anxious to go to heaven; he called upon old Grandmother Smith, in her miserable hovel of a cottage, and found her singing one of the good old hymns, happy as a bird; he called upon Mrs. Brown, who a few weeks before had buried her only child, and found her serene in the view of God's love which had come to her through her affliction, as she smilingly exclaimed: "God sometimes takes away our loved ones that we may be closer drawn to Him." The young clergyman then went home, filled with what he had seen, and when evening came and he was seated in his easy chair, his dear mother near him busy with her needles, he could not help exclaiming: "What a wonderful thing patience is; how much it will do. There is nothing beyond its power! Wonderful! Wonderful! It can do all things." Then the little mother said: "Yes, patience is a wonderful virtue, but there is one thing it does not seem to have the power to do." "What can that be?" said the son. "Why it does not seem to have the power to control a young clergyman's temper when a shirt button is gone," replied the mother. This was a new version of the doctrine of patience to that young clergyman, but it is such a version that many another religious man needs to remember. Many men can "bless

God for religion," but are too weak to keep their temper at home. The value of art is in the fitness of the work; the perfection of music is in little accuracies. So the beauty and power of our religion is seen in the little things in the home. As it takes greater skill to engrave the Lord's prayer upon a five-cent piece than upon a broad steel plate, so it takes more patience to live a manly, Christian life in the home than in public.

Strength should also characterize the young man in the home, for life is a struggle of individuals. Commerce is war. The young man need count very little upon the help of others; he will get what he is able to take, and little more. He should not count upon gratitude; it is a tender plant; it is so rare in the struggle of life that one need not consider it a factor. It is stated that "the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong," and in a sense this is no doubt true. Is it not a fact, however, that the swift in life's race are usually first, and the strong victorious in life's battle? The young man should endeavor to acquire strength of character, that, if possible, he may be first at the goal and in the battle be victorious.

The youth who is to succeed in life must persevere. The smallest axe will, if continually applied, bring down the largest oak. This is one of the great factors in life's success. To be able to continue working, without thought of yielding, until the end, is a great quality. The couplet which we heard so long ago, and which has been repeated so often, teaches not only the young man, but everyone who hears, a useful lesson:

"If at first you don't succeed,
Try, try again."

Pride will not be a characteristic of the young man who is to have the fullest measure of success. There are men today, who are fops. A true man to many is only a tailor's creation; that young man who spends his precious hours before the mirror, and whose supreme ambition is to be up to the latest rule of fashion, is not likely to be of much value as a business man, or be a success in any trade or profession. The wise young man will cast aside all vanity, and in humility of spirit seek his own in life. He will not think that his opinion is better than that of every other person. He will be slow to think that he knows more than his parents; their imperfections will be among the last things he will perceive. If pride has taken hold of any young man, let him remember the worst thing he ever did, and perhaps the bitter memory will take down the swelling.

The young man who successfully performs the duties in the home and in public life will likely have that quality which we call tact. Tact softens the asperities of life. Most people require to be humored. Everyone is sensitive on some point; when it is apparent in your neighbor, be wise and avoid it. Sir Thomas Moore was once sitting on a balcony when an escaped lunatic suddenly appeared with the apparent intention of throwing him over the parapet. Sir Thomas—he was a man of rare tact—suggested that the lunatic first throw over a dog which was on the balcony, that they might see what effect it might have on the animal. This the lunatic did, and immediately rushed down stairs to see what had been the effect of the fall upon the dog. Sir Thomas then quietly locked the door and prevented the lunatic's return. It is well, my young friends, when difficulties

come to have sufficient tact to first throw over the dog.

The young man should strive to be true rather than famous; he should do his work well, whether men recognize it or not. If his work is well done, it will be recognized some day. The true worker does not always receive reward in this life; but his reward is sure. The work of Shakespeare did not receive the praise which it deserved while Shakespeare lived; men recognize its merits now. Burns did not receive great recognition in his short and unhappy life, but all the world knows now that Burns was a genius. Homer was not appreciated in his lifetime; he is now.

> "Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

Many young men enter upon life believing that he is the successful man who grasps most for himself. Young men should remember that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." The young man ought to ask himself, not how much he is about to take out of life but how much he is to put into it. If he takes a great deal out of life for himself, the world is poorer and he is not richer. To put strength into the world for the common good is to bless both him who gives and him who receives.

Every young man should endeavor to make home pleasant. To do so is a duty, for the home has not been organized merely for the pleasure of the children. It is wise not to be too eager for the struggle of life; it will soon come. Old age lives in the past; childhood in the present; youth always in the future. If the young man who is eager for the battle of life knew how terrible

was the struggle before him, he would be willing to wait and minister for a time to the needs of the home.

Youth is the time for dreams. It is wise to discount them and to distinguish between the substance and the shadow. Success in life consists in what one is, and not in what one has. Youth would not be so headstrong and hasty could it be seen that the prides of early life often turn into ashes long before old age arrives. The young man is often too hopeful: he forgets that the world is waiting, not to help him, but to fight him. The world gives its prizes to him who takes them by violence. Youth would be less hasty were true value placed upon experience: to minimize its importance is a fault of youth.

Every man has a chance. Opportunity comes to every one. There is no one who knows everything about everything; there is no one who knows everything about anything. Therefore, there is a chance for you. But before you enter upon life's struggle, remember there are some things which have been learned by experience and which it is well for you to know. Here are some of them:

Have honesty; it is the best policy. As you hope to succeed, acquire the power to consider. Arrive at a conclusion. Fear not to express it; abide by it. Before you begin life's battle, acquire the power of saying "Yes" and "No." To drift is to go upon the rocks.

Learn to wait. "All things come to him who waits."

Make yourself so useful that society cannot do without you.

Love the truth and follow it with such eagerness of devotion that you will never ask where it leads.

If it be possible, do not displease anyone. "If it be

possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

Have no companionships outside the home which you would not make welcome inside the home.

Be cheerful, and go into the manufacture of sunshine.

Generally you will receive what you earn, which is what you deserve. If mediocrity and indifference are in the work you will find them in the pay. If you engage to work for two dollars a day, endeavor to do more in a day than two dollars' worth; do all you can. Be greater than your position. A distinguished educator said:

"If I had a son, I should tell him many times a day to make himself as big a man on the inside as possible." Young men too often want to be big on the outside; to occupy positions which fit them as a turtle's shell fits a clam. Never mind your position, young man; whatever it be, try to fill it. The duties which you have to perform may seem trivial, but because it is a small position is no reason why you should be a small man. You may be big inside, you know, if you are small outside. The young man who applies himself to internal growth, as it were, is bound in time to find a place where he will be able to use every power he possesses. At any rate, better be a big man in a small place than a little man in a big place. A pinch of powder in a small cartridge can make a great noise and drive a bullet a long way. What can it do in a Krupp gun?

Friends, you will never do anything greater than you are; therefore, cultivate yourself. Redeem the time. "We spend our years as a tale that is told." Youth soon

passes, and if we lose youth our opportunity is largely gone.

"Youth is the vision of a morn,
That flies the coming day;
It is the blossom on the thorn,
Which wild winds sweep away;
It is the image of the sky,
Its glassy waters seen
When not a cloud appears to fly
Across the blue serene;
But when the waves begin to roar
And lift their foaming head,
The morning stars appear no more
And all the heaven is fled."

Friends, excuses are often made for thoughtlessness on account of youth. If there is any time when thought should be exercised, it is at the beginning of the voyage or the journey. Before building one should count the cost. If there is anything that should characterize youth it is thoughtfulness. John Ruskin has well expressed himself upon the thoughtlessness of youth, and his words should be accepted by all: "In general, I have no patience with people who talk about 'the thoughtlessness of youth' indulgently. I had infinitely rather hear of thoughtless old age, and the indulgence due to that. When a man has done his work and nothing can anyway be materially altered in his fate, let him forget his toil and jest with his fate if he will; but what excuse can you find for wilfulness of thought at the very time when every crisis of fortune hangs on your decision? A youth thoughtless, when all the happiness of his home forever depends on the chances or the passions of an hour; a youth thoughtless, when the career of all his days depends on the opportunity of a moment; a youth thoughtless, when his

every action is a foundation-stone of future conduct and every imagination a fountain of life or death. Be thoughtless in any after years, rather than now, though, indeed, there is only one place where a man may be nobly thoughtless—his deathbed. Nothing should ever be left to be done there."

Among the great things that this age seems to lack is reverence. The age of reverence seems to be gone. Children lack the respect for their parents which should prevail everywhere. Too often we hear the father and the mother called by unbecoming names. It is well for young men to keep before them what the Bible teaches in regard to reverence and obedience:

"Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

"Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father, and keep my Sabbaths; I am the Lord thy God."

"Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee."

"Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother."

"For God commanded saying, 'Honor thy father and thy mother; and he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.' "

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise."

"Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

"My son, keep thy father's commandments, and forsake not the law of thy mother; bind them continually

upon thy heart, and tie them upon thy neck. When thou goest it shall lead thee; and when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou wakest it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

"A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish man despiseth his mother."

"He that wasteth his father and chaseth away his mother, is a son that earneth shame and bringeth reproach."

Young men should be careful in regard to forming habits. Sometimes we become acquainted with people who soon pass beyond the horizon of our life, and we see them no more; but habits are too frequently life acquaintances.

"Sow a thought and you reap an act;
Sow an act and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit and you reap a character;
Sow a character and you reap a destiny."

Yes, a good habit will probably be a good friend for life, and an evil habit our enemy for all our days. Oh, it is so easy to form a habit; it is most difficult to destroy it.

"Habit at first is but a silken thread,
Fine as the light-winged gossamers that sway
In the warm sunbeams of a summer's day;
A shallow streamlet, rippling o'er its bed;
A tiny sapling, ere its roots are spread;
A yet unhardened thorn upon the spray;
A lion's whelp that hath not scented prey;
A little smiling child, obedient led.
Beware, that thread may bind thee as a chain;
That streamlet gather to a fatal sea;

That sapling spread into a gnarled tree;
That thorn, grown hard, may wound and give thee pain;
That playful whelp his murderous fangs reveal;
That child, a giant, crush thee 'neath his heel.''

The young man who in the home lays the foundation of an upright life will have a glad old age. He will not fear the snows of the winter time of life, for the breath of the eternal spring will be upon his face; he will have the satisfaction of knowing that he has worn the white flower of a pure life. Christ has been his Captain and will not fail him in his old age. When life is over and mother-earth claims him, there will not be lacking friends who will review his honorable career, commend its upright course, and, in their happy musing, say:

''His body to that pleasant country's earth,
And his pure soul unto his Captain, Christ,
Under whose banner he had fought so long.''

THE HOME AND NATIONAL IDEALS

MY dear friends: What has the home to do with national ideals—a theme usually regarded as appropriate for national congresses, and for gatherings of men of mature minds? My answer is, ''Much;'' for of all national congresses convened, the greatest is—Home.

Today the thought of the world places the home among the mightiest educational forces of the religious world. Not even for the religious press, that mighty and magnificent engine for the moulding of religious thought; nor for the pulpit, powerful in every age, will the

home consent to take a subordinate place as an educational force in the moulding of public opinion and in the shaping of the nation's thoughts.

Nor is it strange that the home should hold such a position. Consider that in the home the children are under influences, good or bad, at an age when impressions once received are most permanent in their effect upon life and character. Not only is it possible to implant great principles in the child's mind, principles that later shall bear splendid fruitage in high resolve and noble endeavor, but I venture to assert that unless these principles be instilled in childhood and youth, then this weary world will go on its way, dreaming at times of reform, but never building into a permanent structure of righteousness the fabric of its dream.

Some four-score years ago a lad of ten years was playing in the snow, in the garden of an old country house in northeastern Germany. On the pedestal of a statue broken by the French, when some twenty years before they had swept through Prussia and Poland, he had built a snow man. For a time he pelted the figure lustily with snowballs, but though shot after shot hit the white figure, it did not fall. At length the boy seemed to arouse himself. Seizing a large stone he hurled it with all his might, his eyes flashing, his mouth hardening, at the figure which fell and broke. "What are you doing, Otto?" said an old survivor, who at that moment passed? "I am Germany," was the reply, "and I am overthrowing France." That boy of ten, with the passing years, became Germany's iron chancellor—Prince Bismarck.

If you should ever go to London, you will be sure

to visit Westminster abbey. There you will see the monuments to the kings and queens of England, and of many great men who have distinguished themselves in the history of that country. Among the others you will see a beautiful statue of white marble, with a short inscription upon it: "Love! Serve!" That is the statue of Lord Shaftesbury. He was the son of an earl and the heir to a large estate. Many a young man in his position would have lived a life of selfish pleasure, and would never have troubled about the sorrow and suffering that lie all around us. But when a boy, little Lord Ashley, for that was his name before he succeeded his father as Earl of Shaftesbury, dedicated his life to humanity, receiving into his heart the spirit of our Christ, through the faithful teaching in his home of his nurse, Maria Millis. He was a pupil at Harrow school, and one day as he was standing at the foot of Harrow Hill, a pauper's funeral passed along the road. No mourners were at that funeral. The coffin was but a number of boards loosely nailed together; the men who were driving it along in a cart were laughing and joking. No one cared for this wretched pauper, and he was driven to the graveyard as if he were only a dead dog. In the ears of the sensitive boy who stood and watched this ghastly funeral, the jolting cart-wheels were saying the old refrain:

"Rattle his bones over the stones,
He's only a pauper whom nobody owns."

Young Ashley was so shocked by what he saw that day that he resolved, then and there, that he would set his life in tune with the ideals taught in his home and give his life to the service of the poor and the unfortu-

nate. I have recently read his biography, and it is amazing how nobly and completely his vow was fulfilled. The name of Lord Shaftesbury became a household word throughout the English-speaking world, as the loving servant of those who most needed sympathy and help. Shaftesbury loved the music and the library; he loved the companionships of statesmen and scholars, but the alleviation of woe was his passion. He spent his days and nights, both in and out of parliament, in anxious toil for the boys and girls who worked in the factories; for the little chimney-sweeps who in those days had to climb up the narrow, dark, and dangerous chimneys; for the women who toiled like slaves in the deep coal mines; and especially for the ragged children who ran about the city streets. On the morning after his death, a gentleman was walking along a street in London, when he passed two very ragged boys who were staring into a shop window. As he passed he heard this conversation: "Lord Shaftesbury's dead," said one of the lads. "That's not our Lord Shaftesbury?" replied his companion. "Yes," replied the first, "it's our Lord Shaftesbury." Ah, the very city arabs knew that he loved them, and wished to be their servant and friend. Lord Shaftesbury was the friend of the poor and the oppressed and lived a life that made millions bless God that he had lived; and the foundation of his noble life was laid in the home.

Friends, I believe the time has come when the American people should recognize the efficiency of the home as an educational force in creating and moulding national ideals, for many of our national ideals need revision.

There is nothing more profoundly affecting the life

of the nation than the athletic craze, which has gripped, as with giant's hand, the young manhood of this republic. Here is a subject in which we need make no effort to arouse interest, for interest is already paramount. Now to arraign athletics is not our purpose, but can anyone question that we are today face to face with a serious situation—a situation in which the standard of greatness in the minds of hosts of our young people is physical rather than intellectual or spiritual? It was a professor of classics of the Chicago university who sometime ago declared that: "The honors of the university most sought for have passed from the class-room to the campus." If this be true of the university, we can hardly be surprised that it should be true of the factory and shop.

Have you ever noticed that the sin which brought upon the earth the flood was this very sin, which, I confess, at times seems to threaten our age? "There were giants in those days, men of renown." That sentence throws a flash of light on the whole period. The men of renown—the heroes, the men who were held up as the ideals of manhood were giants, men of muscle, of agility, and strength. It was an age that magnified the physical and material, and lost sight of the spiritual.

Now what can we do to save the youth of our land from that same sin; from thinking that muscle is more than mind, speed more than spirit, force more than faith? Is it a work that needs doing? Who that reads our daily press, glances at our bill-boards, in any measure interprets the trend of life, can doubt it. Is it a work that is worth doing? If to form the character of a nation and mould the life of the peoples that are setting the standards of life for the world is worth doing, then

is this work a worthy one that challenges the most earnest thought and the most consecrated effort of every father and mother of this great nation.

I turn to another field in which no one will deny there is need for the creation of higher ideals than exist. For thousands of years the standards of national greatness have been those associated with powerful armies, with the existence of conditions that make the nation strong to conquer and to subdue. There always have been great souls that have seen deeper and read the meaning of national existence more truly; but all too prevalent has been the thought that a nation is great, according as she has navies to sweep the seas and armies to carry victorious banners into an enemy's territory.

We are learning, I believe, that greatness for a nation as for an individual is not in the power to subdue, but in the power to serve; that the Master's word, "that he who would be greatest must be servant of all," is as true of a country in its national character, as for that country's citizen in his individual capacity.

The throne is no longer a place where he who sits upon it may receive the adulation and homage of those below; it is, instead, so raised that he who sits upon it may from it as a vantage ground the better stoop to serve. This is Christ's conception of all kingships—kingship of wealth, of social distinction, of education, of power, and just as this conception is prevailing—and it is prevailing—His kingdom comes and Christ is coming to His own in the nations of the world.

The nations that are great today are those that serve. America and Britain are great, not because of armies and engines of war but because of service rendered; be-

cause of liberties won and handed on to other peoples; because of burdens borne for other peoples.

Friends, can we teach these things? Can you hold up before your boys and girls the high ideals of national life consistent with peace and with the principles of His kingdom, who is the Prince of Peace? If we can do this, then are we convening the true peace congress, whose decisions shall not be hurriedly announced, but which shall, with the authority that no royal sanction could give them, constrain the nations to abandon slaughter and to substitute for it service and support. Thus shall we build the true temple of concord; not with timber and stones, which with passing ages may decay, but in those strong sentiments, fostered by reason and founded upon the word of God, which shall endure unchanged with the passing years.

In a special sense is this ideal of national life demanded, and demanded in this western world today. Upon our shores, in the trumpet-tones of Atlantic's storm upon our eastern portals, and in Pacific's whispers as insistent as they are strong at our western door, the nations of Europe and Asia are clamoring for admission to these lands of our inheritance. The problem of problems for us today is that of our relationship to these peoples. Our salvation as a nation, our own salvation even more than theirs, depends upon our acceptance of that relationship as one of service. We must recognize the fact that we hold in trust for the world our victories of the past and our high ideals of liberty won through the struggle of the years, in order that we may pass these on to others, so that, in a race unity that the world has not yet seen except in far-off vision, mightier

victories may yet be won and higher ideals still be realized.

Friends, how can we do our part in accomplishing this great work? I gather many answers into one and sum them up in this way: By enshrining in our hearts the spirit of the Christ. My dear friends, believe me, there is no other way. Every true reform, every advance movement in the world's life—political, social and religious—is the work of a soul filled with the Christ-spirit, and as fast as Christ's spirit enters the hearts of our people, so fast will our national ideals be consistent with His teachings and His character.

"Ring in the valiant man and free;
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land;
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

THE CHURCH AND THE STAGE

THE CHURCH AND THE STAGE

ITS ATTITUDE IS THAT OF THE DEVOTED MOTHER TOWARD THE PLAYGROUND OF HER CHILDREN.

THE question is asked: "What is the Attitude of the Church toward the Stage?" To which question I see only one answer: "The attitude of the fond mother toward the playground of her children." The Stage, or, perhaps more properly, the Theatre, has become the great recreation ground of the nation, and, as such, the only logical position of the Church must be of the tenderest concern and deepest interest. The Church, as such, has made no official utterance upon the Stage—unless we take the discipline of the Methodist Society as such, which we can scarcely do, as the Methodist Society is, after all, only a number of Christians banded together and cannot represent the Church. However, a large number of the clergy and people more Christian than the Church have seen fit to render dogmatic judgment and place a ban upon the Stage, using every effort to cut off all intercourse between the two great institutions, until today the expression "the Church and Stage," suggests to the average mind the two extremes of social life; but, in truth, this is only one more of the accepted notions of the age, which is half-true and half-false. That the Church and Stage are extremes of life I grant, but to me they are but

the two opposite poles of a battery without which no power current can be developed.

Man is, after all, a being of extremes, soul and body—as far divided as heaven and earth. Still each is necessary to the other, that, touching, they may form that current called life. Now, just as the soul needs the constant refreshings of religion to keep it strong in the work for heaven, so the body demands constant recreation to keep it strong in its battle of earth. Hence, the normal man can best be preserved when religion and recreation go hand in hand. It is in vain, therefore, for the Church to deal out religion for the complex man, if she leaves his recreations to the powers of the world. Hence, since the Stage is not bad in itself, *per se,* and since it has become the one great recreation for all classes, the manifest duty of the Church is to take hold of it and make it what it can and should be, a great Christian institution. This can be done, not by blind criticism of those who seldom, if ever, are present at Stage performances; nor can influence be exerted by holding aloof, but rather by close association and the determination to move Heaven and earth to elevate the Stage to its highest possibilities, and so use it as a power to elevate the people. In this effort, the Church will find ready and enthusiastic help from every representative—actor and actress.

The American Stage today holds the attention and influences the lives of more people than all the Christian societies combined. There is perhaps more money invested in theatrical enterprises than in purely educational institutions; there is more money spent in the Theatre than would pay the teaching body of our schools. One needs only a superficial knowledge of the drama to be

convinced that stronger moral lessons and deeper religious sermons are daily presented through the standard dramas than are preached from fifty per cent. of the so-called Christian pulpits of the land. The narrow-minded, though well-intending people, who war against the Theatre as an institution cannot, therefore, find justification of their position on the ground that evil influences are using the Stage, or that many bad men and women live by the Theatres. If there are evil influences around this great institution, it is our duty as Christians to destroy them. If we find bad men or women upon the Stage, it is only what we find in all walks of life, even in the Church. We cannot judge any institution by the bad men or women who may happen to be in it, nor even by the evil coming out of it, but rather by the good of which it is capable. If institutions are to be judged by the bad men or women who are found in them, or the evil that comes out, no institution will suffer more than the Church.

The truth is, good and evil are, after all, only relative terms. The goodness or the evilness of any human institution must be judged solely by its relation to the end or object of man. Now the end or object of man is the pursuit of happiness; but since man is a being of sensation, he can find his happiness only in sensation—sensations merely physical or sensations purely intellectual. It follows, therefore, that if the physical sensations are allowed to dominate, the more strongly will be developed the physical or animal man, while on the other hand, the more prevalent the intellectual sensation, the more strongly will be brought forth the God-like, intelligent man. The question, then, is: "What is the

cause of physical, and what the source of intellectual sensation?'' There is no room for an argument here. It is clear to the most superficial mind, that the cause of physical sensations are eating, drinking and other merely animal amusements, while the source of intellectual sensations are in the arts—music, literature, painting and the other expressions of the God-like inner man.

Not a great nation known to time but has used the arts to win the people from base and animal desires to nobler, Godlier manhood. The arts are, and always have been, the criterion by which we judge the culture and advancement of a people or nation. It follows logically, therefore, that any institution which will blend all the arts into a grand popular form of recreation, that institution will be the greatest human power for uplifting and refining the American people. The question, then, is: ''Have we such an institution?'' To which question I unhesitatingly answer: ''We have.'' In the drama; in the mimic Stage we have an institution and art in itself, but combining the power of all the arts. But instead of being an ally of morality, instead of being an uplifting influence, the Church has handed it over bodily into the hands of the worldly and indifferent, allowing the power of hell to use for its own glorification and the damnation of society the greatest human power for influencing the emotions and sentiments of the people. Of all the artists, the actor holds the greatest possibilities for good or evil. The painter appeals to the soul only through the eye; the musician only through the ear; the poet only through the faculty of thought; but the actor appeals to the eye, to the ear, to the thought—he is sculptor, painter, musician, poet, all in one.

Far better than any other artist can the actor interpret and impress upon the soul the great creations of genius, and no man can doubt that upon the intelligent interpretation and general presentation of the works of genius depends the growth of human intelligence and the highest development of man. Hence, it follows that just as the great Catholic Church, the one civilizing influence after the fall of Rome, used the arts—music, painting, sculpturing and architecture, weaving them over into her magnificent ritual to impress and lead the barbarians to Christianity, so should she, and all others with her, now make a compact with the combined arts as exemplified in the Stage, and use this great institution for the good of the masses. The great question is: "How can this be done?" I answer: "It is a cold business proposition. The Theatre is a business; the managers have interested thousands and millions in the work; they expect a return which can only be obtained by catering to those who patronize their enterprises. So long as the clergy and Christian people themselves (at least officially) ignore the Theatre, so long must the business manager cater to the questionable taste of the worldling and unbeliever. But let the clergy and the Church people boldly invade the Theatre, patronize the great dramatic art as they dare to patronize other arts (questionable in many particulars) and then demand of the manager what they pay for—the best."

It takes no very deep study to see the result. As a cold matter of business, the manager will present that for which he finds the demand. There is not a true artist upon the American Stage today whose great ambition is not to produce a great moral standard play which will

make his name live as long as only classical standard drama can live. But, alas! their ambitions are in most cases blasted, because those who should be their sponsors and applauders refuse to publicly encourage their work. Hence, the average actor or actress must spend the best years of his or her life catering to the crowd in sensational, in melodramatic, in mediocre plays, in order to make money and reputation great enough to at least satisfy his or her true artistic ambition, and by the power of a name made in less meritorious works, demand a classical hearing. We are spending three hundred millions a year on our public education alone, to say nothing of the other hundreds of millions spent in private institutions—all this to educate our young people to an appreciation of art and literature. It is high time we spent some money, and time, too, in making the one great institution which answers the cravings so created what it should be—the school of culture, the University of the People. It is a matter of business; demand creates supply. The Stage is, and can be, only what the Church suffers it to be. It will be what she demands of it, when she deems it worth her while to make it her own. A Christian Church and a Christian Stage is the dream and the hope of the thinking man of today.

ALICE AND ALEXANDER

INTRODUCTION TO ALICE AND ALEXANDER

LICE and Alexander is but one of the many instructive and entertaining dramas from the prolific pen of the late Father Vaughan, and in particular has been favorably commented on by the most prominent and leading men and women of both the American and European dramatic stage and by the reading public in general.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY.

The plot of the play centers around Alexander, a Polish prince, who is next heir to the Polish throne, and for whose apprehension a reward of fifty thousand rubles is offered. The prince, who is but fourteen years of age, is in the care of Father Andre. The youth is in love with Alice, the daughter of the Czar of Russia, and who devotedly loves the prince. The maiden has fled from her home to be near her lover, after having been forced into an early and objectionable marriage with one Paul, her father's secretary—which secret she finally confesses to the prince while protesting her love for him and urging him to "fly to other lands" with her, which he refuses to do out of the great love he bears her.

Other veins of love running through the dialogue are those of Miss Kelner and Mr. Polutsky; and Gretchen, who is loved by both Dennis, a jolly Irish lad and a faithful servant of Father Andre, and Pedro—the latter being a villain and a spy who is jealous of Alexander

because he thinks he and Gretchen are in love, and who claims to be a secret officer of the Czar. Finally, to secure the reward Pedro is the means of having Alexander arrested. In this, Alice plays into his hands, as she hopes by so doing to get Alexander out of Russia and thereby cause him to fly with her to a more congenial clime.

When the Czar's attendants come to take Alexander, Father Andre tries by misrepresentation, out of love for Alexander, to protect him from their hands, and tells the soldiers that the prince is not of noble Polish blood, but is of the people. However, Alexander confesses he is the true Polish prince.

Count Jean Jutrewski has been summoned and prepares for an audience with the Czar at St. Petersburg, charged with conduct unbecoming in a subject of his Imperial Majesty. Hearing this, Alexander decides to follow the count, and in turn is followed by the faithful servant Dennis.

They appear before the Czar—who has been informed by Pedro that Count Jutrewski and Alexander are in a plot to take the life of his august highness. The Czar avows death to the plotters. His daughter Alice, who has returned to her home, pleads for Alexander in the presence of her husband, but to no avail. Attendants to the Czar rush in, and during the attack the count is stabbed to death and Alexander escapes.

Later he visits his mother, and meets with Alice and Gretchen. When Pedro learns this he breaks in the door to arrest Alexander, and through hate and jealousy stabs both Alice and Alexander.

ALICE AND ALEXANDER

PROLOGUE

Scene I.

(Scene: Residence of Father Andre. Set to the right. Church in background.)

Enter Gretchen, *at rise of curtain.*

Gretchen. Ha! ha! ha! Bless me if that wasn't a narrow escape. Another minute and that old cow would have been playing ball with the beautiful Gretchen. Ha! ha! Ha! ha! What a sweet figure I would make flying to heaven on a bull's horns! That beats a ham basket all hollow. Pedro says I'm an angel, but excuse me! I'm not fond of flying. Oh, no! I'd rather not. But I'm going to read this book if Miss Kelner skins me for it. Ah! there is just the spot for reading, up there. *(Points to tree.)* Out of sight, and I won't come if she calls herself deaf. [*Exit.*

Pedro. Gretchen! Gretchen! Oh, dear, ain't I tired! I'll bet she's gone with that master Alexander again. She's a fool, she is.

Gretchen *(looking down).* I'll pay you for that, you animated skeleton.

Pedro. There, I heard something! I know they're both laughing at me from their hiding-place. If I wasn't so tired I'd show them how to laugh.

GRETCHEN. Bless me! What a savage corpse! *(Throws nut at him.)*

PEDRO. There she is now; I'll find her. Bless me, how tired I am! *(Starts to go. Gretchen leans down, laughing, loses hold and falls on Pedro.)*

PEDRO. Oh! Oh! I'm dead! I'm dead!

GRETCHEN. Well! for the land's sake, if I didn't most ruin this book. Pedro! Pedro! Get up and learn to act like a Christian.

PEDRO. You've killed me, and I'm so tired!

GRETCHEN. What were you mumbling about? I heard you call me a fool. I heard you——

PEDRO. Well—well—I—I thought you were out again with that baby Alexander.

GRETCHEN. Pedro, you're a senseless idiot. What in the world makes you jealous of Alexander? He's younger than I by a score of years.

PEDRO. Yes, but you spend all your time romping with him.

GRETCHEN. Well, you won't romp with me.

PEDRO. I can't. I'm so tired!

GRETCHEN. Pedro, you're a failure. Such tender plants should die young, and save trouble. If you don't work up a little energy, some one will kill you to save you the exertion of living.

PEDRO. I don't care. I don't like that doll-faced wise man, and I'll hurt him yet.

GRETCHEN. What! Hurt Alexander, and all because you're jealous of him? Say, Pedro, you are an ass! *(Pedro glares at her.)* Yes, that's just what I mean. Haven't you brains enough to guess who the young master is?

PEDRO. I don't think; I ain't got time. I'm so tired!

GRETCHEN. Then listen; mind, now, you must never tell, but Alexander is beyond me. I would never dare to look straight at him. Why, Pedro, he's the Prince Alexander, next heir to the Polish throne!

PEDRO. The devil!

GRETCHEN. No, no, not the devil! I didn't say so.

PEDRO. No folly, no nonsense. Is this true? You say he is a Polish prince?

GRETCHEN. That's what I said. You act as if you weren't well.

PEDRO. Then my fortune is made. *(Reads.)* "Fifty thousand rubles for information of the supposed Polish heir." *(Starts to go.)*

GRETCHEN. Where are you going? I thought you were tired. If you move far at that rate you'll prostrate yourself.

PEDRO. Don't you want me to go? Can I do anything for you? I'm so tired!

GRETCHEN. I'm awfully sorry, but I want you to go to town for me, and get me these articles. Sure, now.

PEDRO. And, remember, not one word to anybody about Alexander.

GRETCHEN. Oh, no, not a word. *(Aside.)* He'll never trouble me again. Never again. [*Exit* PEDRO.

GRETCHEN. Well, to think of Pedro believing that I was after Alexander! Oh, no! It's too expensive nowadays to be a princess. It sometimes costs you your head, and I think I look better with mine on. Oh, no! No princess for me; I'd rather not.

ALEXANDER *(without.)* Whoa! Whoa! That's a darling fellow! *(Enters.)* Ain't he a beauty, Gretchen?

Ain't he the darlingest dog you ever saw? Father Andre will rave like a madman when he finds I've got him, but I'll talk him over, see if I don't!

GRETCHEN. Oh, Master Alexander, you should be at your lessons. It is an hour past your study time, and Father Andre will be very cross if he finds it out.

ALEXANDER. Don't preach now, for goodness' sake! If you start in with the rest, I'll go and join a cloister at once and turn a shavey-headed monk. Wouldn't I make a nice shavey-headed monk? Eh, Gretchen? *(Both laugh.)* Wouldn't I, Jacques?

GRETCHEN. There, Jacques says yes.

ALEXANDER. And so I'm doomed! Here I go to solitary confinement.

GRETCHEN. Don't! Don't! Where are you going?

ALEXANDER. Oh, you know it's past my time of study.

GRETCHEN. Oh, bother study! Come here and tell me where you got the dog.

ALEXANDER. Stole him.

GRETCHEN. What?

ALEXANDER. Yes, stole him.

GRETCHEN. Now, tell me the truth. You know what Father Andre will say.

ALEXANDER. Father Andre! I never thought of him when I saw the dog. Strange I never think of Father Andre when I see dogs. I'm a good deal more afraid of him.

GRETCHEN. What did you give for the dog?

ALEXANDER. Who told you?

GRETCHEN. Told me what?

ALEXANDER. That I gave something for the dog.

GRETCHEN. I didn't say you did. I only asked. But now you've acknowledged it, tell me.

ALEXANDER. Ye gods! As the man in the novel says: "I'm in disgrace; I'm ruined." *(Laughs.)* Gretchen, I gave my diamond pin.

GRETCHEN. Oh, you'll be killed.

ALEXANDER. But he's a beauty, and a darling hunter. Just wait, and I'll show you. There's a chicken. I'll send him for it. Sic 'im, Jacques, sic 'im!

[*Exit* JACQUES.

GRETCHEN. Oh, oh, Alexander, it's——

ALEXANDER. Look! Look! Ain't he a beauty? Just see him go after that hen. Ah, there he's got him, and—oh, look, look!

GRETCHEN. Father Andre! Now you'll catch it, sure.

ALEXANDER. I—I didn't do anything. It was the dog.

Enter FATHER ANDRE.

FATHER ANDRE. Well—well—I'm—I'm sure I can't think who owns this dreadful dog. Alexander, lad, you should know who let this dog into the grounds.

ALEXANDER. I—well—I—he's a beauty, ain't he, Father?

FATHER ANDRE. A—a beauty, did I hear you say? Alexander! See! Just see! He has killed my best hen! Ah, lad, you look guilty. You know I forbade you playing with dogs.

ALEXANDER. Oh, I—I didn't do anything.

GRETCHEN *(aside)*. I guess I'll scoot. [*Exit.*

FATHER ANDRE. Ah, but your face tells me a much different story. Tell the truth, lad. Never glide from the road of honor into the rushing torrent of untruth.

Remember who you are, and how I have striven to raise you.

ALEXANDER. Well, yes, it was me. I sic'd him on, but—I—I didn't mean to do anything.

FATHER ANDRE. That's right. What do I care for the senseless fowl. But for your honor, lad. You are fast blooming into manhood. Fourteen in two weeks. Remember, Alexander, when I am dead and gone, how I loved you. Remember this, my lesson: "Death before dishonor; any torture before the torture of conscience." Remember you are a Pole—a Polish prince, and never stoop to a deliberate lie.

ALEXANDER. Oh, I'll remember; but say, Father Andre, can—can I keep the dog?

FATHER ANDRE. My lesson must have fallen deeply. *(Smiles.)* But, yes, keep the dog. Better spend your time with the companionship of noble brutes than in the society of dishonest men. *(Sits on steps, draws Alexander down beside him.)* Alexander, I love you to folly. Each day new bonds are encircled around my heart. We priests, to whom all earthly love is forbidden, when once we set our hearts upon a sinless prize, our love is mad—a wild, sad, reckless affection, that thrives, increases, expands, until our very life is lost in vain, hopeless longings. So, I have placed my heart on you, and yet I know some day it will bring me only pain, misery and remorse.

ALEXANDER. How sadly you talk, Father Andre. I know you love me, and though I sometimes do what isn't just right, yet I love you more than any one living. But, tell me, Father, why do you stand by my bed at night and

watch me sleep? I caught you last night—you kissed me. Say, Father Andre, why did you kiss me?

FATHER ANDRE. I watched you in your sleep, and wondered how that kind and loving God can see so fair a life destroyed. I kissed you then, for the times that are to come when no one will be near to kiss that fair young brow; when you will roam alone, with not one friend to keep the tyrant's hand from off that snowy throat.

ALEXANDER. How you go on! I'm sure I can't make out what you mean. Say, ain't that a lovely whip?

FATHER ANDRE. 'Tis better so—to think of whips and dogs while yet you may. The time will come soon enough when you must pay the penalty of being born a Polish prince. [*Exit.*

ALEXANDER. Come, Jacques; come, now, pull. I knew he'd give in at last. [*Exit.*

Enter MISS KELNER *and* MR. POLUTSKY.

MR. POLUTSKY. But, really, my dear Miss Kelner, I must insist; this is a—really, I must tell you this has more than astonished me.

MISS KELNER. Yes, mine friendt. You know how the peoples will say.

MR. POLUTSKY. Yes, that's just it, my dear madam; I—ah—really—I never pry into anybody's affairs, but—ah—really, this is so extraordinary an affair that I—

MISS KELNER. Yes, good Mr. Polutsky, but you see, I don't know what you are.

MR. POLUTSKY. Hm! Ah—don't know what I am? Really, Miss Kelner, I am astonished! That is—I really——

Miss Kelner. Ah, mine goodness! I don't see what you talk about!

Mr. Polutsky. Me? Me? Don't know what I'm talking about? Really, Miss Kelner—I—I—ahem! In fact, I am—that is—you know—I like to get at the bottom of facts, and—ah—this affair that I hear of yourself and—Father Andre actually keeping, that is—I mean—really, sheltering a political fugitive, that is—you know—or rather I mean to say, a Polish aspirant.

Miss Kelner. Mine goodness. Ve don't keep no such peoples.

Mr. Polutsky. Well, I expected that it was—that is—I felt you would really—you know, I take little notice of public talk, but this was ah—really—you know, so serious an affair, and I know that you so strongly adhere to—to——

Miss Kelner. Nein, nein! I never was married. I don't adhere to anybody.

Mr. Polutsky. Ah! Just so. That is—I admire the sentiment, but really—won't you take a seat, Miss Kelner, that we—may talk a little? You know—that is—I am much valued by the government—that is, by the personal dignitaries of—really—you know—of his imperial majesty himself——

Miss Kelner. Dot's very nice.

Mr. Polutsky. Yes, yes. I'm so situated, I might—that is—you might—or, rather—really—I could make my wife very comfortable——

Miss Kelner. Oh, my goodness, you vas a married man? Und you goes about telling the people you vas single.

Mr. Polutsky. Married? Married? I married? Really, Miss Kelner, er—you are laboring under a delusion. I am—that is—I never was married; until I can—really, Miss Kelner, make you——

Gretchen (*from without*). Miss Kelner, Miss Kelner, meat's a-burning to a crisp. [*Exit* Miss Kelner.

Mr. Polutsky. Well, well, now. That's a pretty thing. And I really—I was getting on nicely, too; but, bless me, if I don't think some trouble will come of this talk about the boy Alexander. And, really, why the government has just offered a reward for the arrest of all the Polish heirs.

Noise without. Enter Miss Kelner *and* Gretchen.

Gretchen. What in goodness is the matter out there, Mr. Polutsky? There are soldiers and a large crowd of people.

Mr. Polutsky. I—I—really—that is—I am afraid it's all about that stupid report, Miss Kelner.

Miss Kelner. About Alexander! Go! Go! Gretchen, tell Father Andre they are here. [*Exit* Gretchen. Mein Gott! Mein Gott! Mine little boy! *(Falls into Polutsky's arms.)*

Mr. Polutsky. Well—well—I—this is—really—a most compromising position. Really—I had best take the lady in. [*Exit into house.*

Soldiers enter from left.

Captain. Halt! Remember the order—dead or alive, he must be taken.

Enter Gretchen.

Gretchen. Please, please, good Mr. Soldier-man, I think you've made a mistake.

CAPTAIN. No talk, girl. Such as you should never think. Go, tell thy master, Father Andre, that I wish him to appear before me. (GRETCHEN *stares at him.*) What, you stare? Get thee, girl. Nay! Stay. Say, I command him in the name of the Czar to appear with his treasonous charge.

FATHER ANDRE *(enters from church).* I am here. Who dare accuse Andre Paulewicz of a treasonous charge? Has the Czar forgotten my services during the last revolt? Did Father Andre flinch from grasping a sword when the country called for defenders? My son, your words sound badly when addressed to me.

CAPTAIN. Peace! you prattling priest. I come at the imperial order to arrest the Polish aspirant who is in your charge. No folly now. You are betrayed. From your own house comes the information. I command you in the name of the Czar to surrender to me Alexander, the Polish prince left in your charge by his mother, the false and rightly punished——

FATHER ANDRE. Hush! What know you of the unfortunate Czarina, that most devoted mother? I tell you, you have been misinformed. No Polish prince is in my charge.

CAPTAIN. Prince or no prince, I have orders for the arrest of the boy Alexander, now in your charge.

FATHER ANDRE. Alexander, my pride, my only companion! The blow has come at last. I am punished for having placed my heart upon him. They shall not take him from me! No! No! I will not give him up!

CAPTAIN. What say you, priest? The boy—I want the boy!

FATHER ANDRE. The lad you seek is of the people.

No Polish blood flows in his veins. Go back to your master and say that I, Father Andre Paulewicz, pledged my word that the boy is not the one you seek.

CAPTAIN. He is the one I want. The prince.

FATHER ANDRE. You will not trust my words? Then, hark you—Alexander, before the sacred temple I swear——

Enter ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER. Did somebody call me?

CAPTAIN. Seize him! There is the Polish prince!

FATHER ANDRE. It is not he. I swear he is no prince. Are you men of stone? Have you no heart? Would you rob me of the only joy life has ever had for me? If you but knew how fondly I have watched him since the day his mother died and left me his protector bound; how he has been my fondest hope; by night my dreams, by day my sweet companion—pupil, tutor, child, you would not wonder at this tearful voice and choky utterance that pleads to you to leave him with me.

CAPTAIN. Remove the lad! Away!

FATHER ANDRE. Stay! Stay a moment yet, I pray you. Can land or gold redeem the boy? Go, Gretchen, go—my coffers are full; all—all is yours, but let the boy remain. Take—take it all, and go back to your imperial master and say that I, Andre Paulewicz, have pledged my word.

CAPTAIN. If this be so, why has the lad not spoken for himself? He stands there yet as if he knew it all. What say, you priest? How answer you for this? Most men would tremble at the sight. He asks no questions, but seems to see it all.

FATHER ANDRE *(aside)*. I've lied myself, yet I cannot bid him follow. He—he—Alexander!

GRETCHEN (*rushes to* ALEXANDER). Tell them you are not he. Swear you are not the prince of Poland. Alexander, my friend, they mean no good to the Polish heir—only his death will satisfy them. For my sake, for his—for his sake, say you are not Alexander.

ALEXANDER. You would have me lie to these? A hundred men seek for a single boy, and yet they are armed to the very teeth, that he should prove too smart for them. This tells me what a lesson they have learned from others of the Polish lines. Then shall I stoop to lie for such men, who, ere they grasp a beardless boy, look well to see their weapons at hand? No! In your face I cast defiance. I am the Polish prince! I shall not lie!

CAPTAIN. It is he! Away with him!

FATHER ANDRE. Back, back! You shall not take him from me. I fought for others, and shall I not protect mine own? Yet 'tis no use. See, on my knees, I, Andre Paulewicz, I, who have never asked favor from the Czar, plead, kneel. I want no favor—only my child, my boy!

CAPTAIN. Away, away with him!

FATHER ANDRE. Alexander, my child, my child!

CAPTAIN *(strikes priest)*. Curse the priest!

ALEXANDER. Coward! *(Breaks away.)* And they call you men! Have these white hairs no value in your sight? Curs!—worse than brutes, take but one step to harm yon prostrate form, and lo! I'll plunge this dagger home and cheat you of your prize!

FATHER ANDRE. Alexander, my son!

ALEXANDER. Father Andre! Father Andre!

[*Soldiers drag* ALEXANDER *off*.

FATHER ANDRE. They have taken my boy! Alexander! Alexander! Good God I'm alone—alone! (*Falls.*)

(Curtain.)

ACT I.

(Scene: Music Room in Residence of Father Andre.)

ALICE. I tell you, Alexander, you take that note dreadfully flat.

ALEXANDER. Indeed! And what do you pretend to say of your own questionable rendering?

ALICE. Oh, I dare say it's simply vile, if you're to be the judge.

ALEXANDER. I did not say so.

ALICE. No, but you thought as much. I know you did, but I don't care. You can't take that note without being flat.

ALEXANDER. Oh, you're quite a judge of music, I see.

ALICE. Well, I think I ought to know something of it; I've been taking lessons long enough.

ALEXANDER. If you have, it's a relief to hear you acknowledge it.

ALICE. Oh, indeed. Alexander, you're the most rude young man I know.

ALEXANDER. You forget your young men are limited.

ALICE. I'll never speak to you again, so there!

ALEXANDER. Very well; I guess I'll stand it. *(Sings.)*

ALICE. You think you sing that lovely, don't you? Well, you don't, so there.

ALEXANDER. I thought you weren't going to speak.

ALICE. You're just the most disagreeable young man I know.

ALEXANDER. Thank you. I appreciate the compliment. I don't see what you're looking over here for.

ALICE. I wasn't looking at you. I saw you laugh, though. You think you're smart, but you're not, so there!

ALEXANDER. Alice, Alice! *(Alice looks.)* Come here, I want to show you what a pretty birthday gift I received from a lady friend.

ALICE. Alexander, you're the gentleman and should come to me.

ALEXANDER. Oh, very well, if you don't want to see it; but the lady thinks a great deal of you.

ALICE. Does she? *(Crosses.)* Say, Alexander, who is the young lady?

ALEXANDER. I thought you weren't coming over.

ALICE. Well, I'm not.

ALEXANDER. Well, there, I suppose I'll have to come to you. Say, Alice, I might be a little wrong in that air. I want you to teach me.

ALICE. Oh, I'm so glad you acknowledge it.

ALEXANDER. I don't acknowledge anything, until we try again.

ALICE. Come, then. Sit by me and I'll teach you. (*Both sit;* ALEXANDER *kisses her.*)

ALICE. What did you do?

ALEXANDER. I caught the note.

ALICE. Oh, Alexander, you bad boy; we used to do those foolish things before I went to school. We were children then, and there was only innocence in a stolen kiss. Now, all is changed. That kiss were better not taken.

ALEXANDER. What, have you grown so wise as to scoff at kisses? Well, if I must, I'll put it back again.

ALICE. You smile, Alexander, but to me all is serious now. I hoped that you might forget me, and yet I prayed that death might save me from so sad a blow. Alexander, I fear to tell you what is in my soul. Three long weeks have dragged away since I returned, and yet I dared not speak the cause that sent me here to you.

ALEXANDER. What is it, dear? The sunshine of my lonely life, speak quickly, though, lest suspense strained beyond endurance chase my reason from its seat. Tell me, Alice, thou sweetest ray of God's omnipotence, have you ceased to love me? Has one more fair than I stolen my treasure from me?

ALICE. Ceased—ceased to love you? Alexander, when that day comes, my soul shall wing its flight. This heart, now wrung with a hundred cruel pangs, will silent be forever. Alexander, I love you now, not so wildly, but more deeply than ever. But, Alexander, I am not your girlish love, I am—ah, turn your head, or I shall lose the good impulse and still live on, love on, as for the past three weeks.

ALEXANDER. What is it, love, that so burdens your mind? Have I done aught to cast dishonor on your name? If so, I pledge you, by my God, I'll free your name, e'en if it costs my head.

ALICE. See! Now you're serious too. You're sad when I am sad, and I am glad when smiles tell me you are happy. Oh, Alexander, would that I were dead, ere I were forced to tell you this—my fate. I am not the Alice of old. Alexander, hear me, I am a wife. (*Leans on* ALEXANDER'S *shoulder.*)

ALEXANDER. What? A wife? (*Hurls her from him.*) A wife? A wife? Alice. What devil bade you speak these words? Ah, she weeps; forgive me, Alice. I know you are jesting; but, oh, the very thought has caused my blood to rise in fury.

ALICE. Alexander, it is true. They—my father, knowing that I loved you, and fearing lest I should seek marriage with a Pole, forced me into a marriage before I knew what marriage meant. Yes, Alexander, before I entered that convent school, I was already a wife.

ALEXANDER. And still you loved me, Alice? (*Leans her head on his shoulder.*) Then I will never give you up. Though death, yea, hell itself, stands in my way, I'll bear you off, where Russian laws and Polish blood shall hold no sway to check our happiness.

ALICE. Yea, Alexander, I too have thought of that. Let us fly; fly far from here. What care I what may be said, if I am happy, thrice blessed in your love.

ALEXANDER. No, no. My conscience speaks, my better self prevails. It cannot be.

ALICE. Cannot be?

ALEXANDER. No, Alice. Drive my image from your heart. If this be true, nothing is left for us but separation.

ALICE. What? Separate? We who have loved since first we laid our eyes upon each other? No, I have dreamed of other plans. Come, let us fly from Russia; in other lands all unknown we'll find peace and happiness.

ALEXANDER. What, fly with you? Oh, Alice, you know not how I love you. What would such a step bring to you but misery? And to me, shame and remorse. No,

no. When the sneers of the world should come, as come they would, I'd love you so that death alone could free me from shame at having brought its scorn upon you.

ALICE. You say you love me, and yet you'll surrender me to another? Alexander, you are a man, noble and brave. This marriage was without love; you can save me from this sacrifice. Let us fly together; the wrong can be no greater to fly with you than to remain here hating my husband.

ALEXANDER. No, the wrong is not so great, but the consequences are greater far. Alice, I love as men seldom love. From early boyhood my love has grown, and now when you are all that is good and beautiful to me, shall I advise you to destroy that which I most worship—your purity, your innocence as a woman? No Russian law can make you his wife, save in name only. So remain, if he is repulsive to you. Perhaps future years will bring us peace and happiness.

ALICE. My heart is breaking. You are right. And yet—and yet, I've lived and prayed but to meet you; to hold you to my heart and feel that you are mine. And now, good-bye, but not forever; no, I will see you soon, very soon.

ALEXANDER. One last embrace. Good-bye; God bless you. [*Exit.*

ALICE. Oh, that I were dead, that I were dead! Alexander, Alexander, how shall I live on and never see you again! How shall I be a dutiful wife and know that you are waiting—waiting my hour of deliverance. I shall not give him up. No, my life, my soul; nay if it costs me my honor. [*Exit.*

Enter GRETCHEN. *Holding* DENNIS *by ear.*

DENNIS. Yes, it's me.

GRETCHEN. Who are you, sir?

DENNIS. Sure, I'm meself.

GRETCHEN. Well, how did you come here? Do you belong here?

DENNIS. Faith, and I do. I'm an attachment—a stationary fixture.

GRETCHEN. Well, how did you come here?

DENNIS. Shure, the master met me down at the school beyant, and took the greatest fancy in the world to me; an' sure, how could he help it?

GRETCHEN. Of course not; you're so awfully, awfully pretty.

DENNIS. Go way wid ye now; sure you don't mane it. It's bamboozling me you are.

GRETCHEN. Oh, but I do mean it; how could I help it?

DENNIS. Sure, you're making me heart thresh me ribs like a bellows; it's as soft as new butter I'll be directly. But do ye know, me darlint, I've had me eye on ye for a long time.

GRETCHEN. Oh, you have, have you? Well, I've had both of mine on you, with your skulking about at the back fence and sticking your nose in at the front. I thought you were a chicken thief.

DENNIS. I can lick any man in the country that says I'm a chicken thief.

GRETCHEN. Oh, oh, I only thought——

DENNIS. And sure you can think what ye like. It's an angel ye are. Will ye marry me?

GRETCHEN. Oh, I can't.

DENNIS. An' why not, me darlin?

GRETCHEN. I'm an angel, and angels never marry. *(Laughs. Starts to go.)*

Enter PEDRO.

DENNIS. Shure, it's a kiss I must have.

GRETCHEN. Oh! You mustn't, you—you—sst—sst—sst—!

DENNIS. No, I'll not sst—sst—sst. Glory be to goodness, can't you talk straight?

GRETCHEN. I—I want to say——

DENNIS. Well, speak out, and stop yer splutterin'.

GRETCHEN. Oh, there's the master. He's looking——

DENNIS. For meself. (*Starts to go.*) I'll see you again. [*Exit.*

PEDRO. (*Advancing.*) Making love to the Irish fool, eh? Ah, my girl, you will stand being watched. The master will not marry you himself, so would have you anyway by making you the wife of his Irish tool. Oh, girl, if you are false to me, I will kill you; so have a care, have a care!

GRETCHEN. Nonsense, Pedro; I never met the Irish valet until now. You're in a temper; I'll talk to you when you are in a better frame of mind. [*Exit.*

PEDRO. Curse the master, he's always in my path. She will not marry me. And why? She hopes to have him yet. But I'll fix them; I'll fix them.

Enter ALICE.

ALICE. Pedro! (*He starts.*) No, do not fear me. You hate the master and want him out of the way; I too want him out of Russia. You are a private government

spy. See that Alexander is charged with treason to the government, then leave the rest to me.

PEDRO. I understand. 'Tis well that the princess sees best to make a friend of Pedro. What I know, might not sound well repeated.

ALICE. I make a friend of Pedro? I? You dog! Do not forget to whom you are speaking. Accept my bribe or leave it, as you please; but remember, harm not one hair of his noble head at the peril of your life.

PEDRO. And for my reward?

ALICE. I made you a government spy. I can also make you a commissioned officer. Come, as we walk, I will tell you my plan. [*Exit both.*

Enter COUNT *and* COUNTESS JUTREWSKI.

COUNT. I find it hard, Catherine, to submit to these demands of a tyrannical government. Now what in the wide world does his august majesty, the Czar, want of me at St. Petersburg? I grow tired of these constant exactions. Is it because we are Poles, that we must constantly be undergoing this test of allegiance?

CATHERINE. Jean, be patient; how much better have we fared than the thousands of our countrymen who are left with neither homes nor means of living. Do be——

COUNT. Better off, Catherine, my wife, do I hear you say? Better off? Is it better to live in sumptuous slavery than to be humble and free? I tell you, Catherine, I have tired of this. I shall go to St. Petersburg, but it must be my last journey. In service I shall be loyal, as I have sworn to be, but my soul rebels against this tyranny.

CATHERINE. You must be prudent, my husband; prudent in word and act. Not for yourself; I know you

care not, but our boy, our prince, he is in favor already, and who may tell what good fortune may be his if you destroy it not. Think well, my husband; think well, and speak but wisely.

COUNT. Fear not, my dear, I shall not injure the prospects of our prince, yet I wish he were more a Pole and not so much a Russian. Methinks at times he has forgotten our old home in the hills, and has ceased to mourn for our unfortunate country. Catherine, if it were so I should forget that he were my prince, a son of——

CATHERINE. Hush, have a care! Someone may be listening. Such words are treason to the Russian mind. I pray you, my husband, have a care. (*Jean advances and kisses her.*) I will pray for you, Jean. God will protect you.

COUNT. Good-bye; God bless you. [*Exit* CATHERINE. A strange feeling oppresses me. I am greatly unnerved, much worried. (*Dons hat and gloves.*)

Enter ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER. My father, where to so late? The night is already advanced. I thought I was the only one astir. Is this another one of these troublesome journeys?

COUNT. Yes, another tyrannical command, with neither sense nor reason. I think now I can see this man after my long journey and hours of waiting in the anteroom, say with the nicest smile, that he is glad I came looking well—and that is all, or perhaps not even that much notice, after my long and troublesome journey. I tell you, my son, I have felt that I could strangle these men.

ALEXANDER. I beg you, be calm, my dear count. So few may be trusted to hear such words.

COUNT. And do you—the Prince Alexander—do you not feel the sting of slavery? Are you the prince that dare not speak his name aloud? A son of Alexander, and speak so softly of fear? My son, be strong; let not the soft words of Russia buy your heart. Remember, you are a Pole, a Polish prince, and the sods of our native land are crimsoned in their families' blood.

ALEXANDER. What is it, my friend? Why do you speak so now?

COUNT. Listen, my son. I have seen the villages of Poland, when peace reigned supreme; the hills and mountains of that lovely land, clothed in a mantle of velvet green; her valleys soft in grassy richness, dotted here and there by the pretty wild flowers; the tinkling brook that wound its way through the thick foliage of the forest, leaping the white pebbles in soft music as it dashes onward to its bed in the lakes, and still appearing like pools of liquid silver as it reflects the kisses of the rising moon. But, mark how soon the scene changes. A savage Russian host sweeps down upon the confiding inhabitants. Fiercely, bravely they struggle, but the angels of war had turned their backs upon us. Loudly they called to heaven for victory, but it half appeared that God had fled from Poland. In a single night, it seemed, our virgin hills turned red with human gore. The valley, once so beautiful, now strewn by the dead and living; the tiny streamlet, lost in the woodland, dashed on, a dark crimson, with the fluid of life. Scarce a day it seemed, yet where are the men of Poland? Twined in the arms of death, the fathers slept on the hillside, the darkening

valleys were strewn with the noble men of our land, and mothers, wives, sisters, well beloved, dragged off into slavery, sold to men more cruel than death. Such were the wars of our land. My child, forget not the picture; let not this cursed country gain your heart.

ALEXANDER. Fear not for me, my father. The picture you present is already here. and trust to the son of Alexander to be faithful to it.

COUNT. I thank God that you are not corrupted by the wealth of this country. Be noble, my boy; at any cost be brave, and always prefer death to any dishonest act. I must make haste. The night is advancing, and I must be on my way.

ALEXANDER. I shall see you beyond the gates. Come.

[*Exit both.*

Enter COUNTESS *and* MR. POLUTSKY.

MR. POLUTSKY. But really, Countess, this is most extraordinary. We—that is I should say—I am surprised; I am indeed—really, I cannot make it out.

COUNTESS. Nor can I. It must be some absurd mistake.

MR. POLUTSKY. I—ah—really, Russia is going from bad to worse. That is—I should say—she began by upsetting the throne and churches, and now she—really—she accuses—or rather I should say attempts to—to—really—attack the honor of an old and respected family.

COUNTESS. Jean accused of treason? I cannot bring my mind to believe it. Mr. Polutsky, where did you hear of this?

MR. POLUTSKY. From a most reliable source; or—that is—a—I should say, from our own people. Really, my dear Countess, from Pedro himself.

Enter PEDRO.

COUNTESS. From Pedro? And he? Whence has he this information?

PEDRO. From the imperial police, Countess. I am, as you know, a secret officer of his imperial highness, and am reprimanded for not having reported the treasonous conduct of the count.

Enter ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER. Who dares to speak of treason and the count?

PEDRO. His excellency, the count, is charged with conduct unbecoming in a loyal subject, and has been summoned to St. Petersburg to be tried by prejudiced and partial judges, who already hold him convicted.

ALEXANDER. I see, I see; he is doomed.

COUNTESS. Jean! Jean! My husband! (*Faints in* POLUTSKY'S *arms.*)

MR. POLUTSKY. I—I—really—my dear Countess!

ALEXANDER. Mr. Polutsky, please to help the Countess to her apartments. I wish to learn more of this affair.

[*Exit* COUNTESS *and* MR. POLUTSKY.

ALEXANDER. You say the count has been summoned, only to be tried?

PEDRO. Yes, your excellency; and such trials are a mere form. Some enemy is working against him.

ALEXANDER. Then he shall not go to St. Petersburg. I have still time to overtake him and warn him of the Czar's intentions. Quick, Pedro, my sword! [*Exit* PEDRO. Accused of treason, and why? My God, at last my trial has come.

Enter PEDRO.

PEDRO. Here, your excellency. (*Adjusts sword.*)

ALEXANDER. Farewell, Pedro. Acquaint the Countess that I am gone. [*Exit.*

PEDRO. At last, at last. Go, my royal friend, go to your doom.

Enter DENNIS.

DENNIS. Say, you haythin, where is the master?

PEDRO. Civil words, my friend.

DENNIS. But where is the master? Where is the master, I say?

PEDRO. Gone; gone to St. Petersburg.

DENNIS. To his death, you divil, you. So this is your thrick, is it? You know he'll defy them, and be taken prisoner by the divils. Oh, I know a few things, me bucko, and I'll spoil that job for you.

PEDRO. What will you do?

DENNIS. I'll follow him.

PEDRO. You shall not move.

DENNIS. Out of my way! (*They struggle.* DENNIS *throws* PEDRO.)

Enter ALICE.

ALICE. Stay! You shall not follow! It is my will!

(Curtain.)

ACT II.

(Scene: Palace of Czar.)

BARTOSHEK. And now, your august highness, I would call your attention to the vacancy in the office of gover-

nor general, caused by the death of your royal subject, Count Anton Jonashek. Whom shall we appoint to this most important charge?

CZAR. I have already considered and summoned to St. Petersburg, Count Jean Jutrewski.

BARTOSHEK. A Pole!

CZAR. I know of no one more loyal to myself or more faithful to a charge. (*Enter page with card. Delivers it to* BARTOSHEK.) Let the papers be drawn at once. I expect him each moment.

SECRETARY. Pedro, your secret agent, begs an audience with your majesty.

CZAR. I have no time for these cringing dogs. Tell him to state his business to the officer in charge and depart. (*Exit page.*) And now let us withdraw. And you, my noble Roman, come see me at my apartments. I will speak with you alone.

Enter page. Goes to SECRETARY.

SECRETARY. Pedro presses your highness for an audience, and urges most important affairs of state.

CZAR. Bid him enter. (*Enter* PEDRO.) Speak. What is this important matter?

PEDRO. I have come to warn you of the Count Jean Jutrewski, and his so-called son, Alexander. I know not if the count be false, but Alexander has arranged a plot which aims at your august highness' life.

CZAR. Go on! Go on!

PEDRO. The count started early for St. Petersburg, and Alexander started an hour later. I heard enough that passed to understand that they mean to attempt your destruction.

CZAR. What? Dog! Dare you say destroy me? Jean Jutrewski, my most trusted subject, plotting at my life?

PEDRO. But, your august highness, it is only what I heard them plotting; and others, many others, are in the scheme.

CZAR. Away! I shall not give credence to such wild, unfounded stories. Begone, dog, and see that you prove what you have said, or——

SECRETARY. Prudence, your highness; caution! We know not whom to trust.

PEDRO. Yes, your august highness, take steps to stop this plan, or they will attack you when you least expect it.

CZAR. Perhaps you are right. It is well to be prepared, even for friends. But mark me, if this report be false, it will cost you your office.

PEDRO. I—I spoke but——

CZAR. To business! When is this attack to be made?

PEDRO. This very day. (*Enter page. Goes to* SECRETARY.) When your highness receives the count he will give the signal and the attack will be made at once. Mark me, you are surrounded by the plotters, ready to spring at your throat.

SECRETARY. Your highness, here is a message from the police, saying that the Count Jean Jutrewski entered St. Petersburg at midnight, and the son, Alexander, followed at daybreak, both acting most strangely. (*Reads.*) "As we have no notice of their being called, we thought well to notify your august majesty."

CZAR. They, too, suspect. Then it may be true. (*To* PEDRO.) Go, you, and notify the police to be in readiness, and you, Paul, see that not the faintest suspicion of this

be let abroad. I will see my count and the Polish upstart. I will; and mark me, Paul, mark me, all, cut them to pieces at the first sign of treason. Shoot them as ye might the merest dog. Come away. Remember my command: "Death without one word."

ALICE. (*Rushing in and falling at* CZAR'S *feet.*) Father, father, take back those words. Would you have their blood upon your head? Do not murder them. If their acts are strange, let them explain. All will be right.

CZAR. Rise, child; this is no place for you to plead for those who would murder your father. They shall not live to speak. If that Polish upstart dares to appear unbidden, I bid you all, let his life pay the penalty of his presumption. (*Starts to go.*)

ALICE. (*Clasps knees of* CZAR.) Father, hear me. Hear me, I beg—

CZAR. Away; I command you, child, withdraw.

ALICE. I shall not see him die. No thought of treason is in his mind.

CZAR. Then he will not be here today?

ALICE. He will, he will! I swear to you he comes only to see the count. Let him speak.

CZAR. Not one word. If he appears it is the sign of treason. Let him die.

ALICE. You will not murder him. It is all my work—my lie to secure his exile. I——

CZAR. Stop, stop, child. Would you stain your own name to save him? Away, unhappy child! Count, remove your wife. *(To Paul.)* [*Exit* PAUL *and* ALICE.

Enter MR. POLUTSKY *and* PEDRO.

MR. POLUTSKY. But, positively, my dear friend, there

must be—that is, I feel that—or rather—really there is some mistake.

PEDRO. Yes, it looks oddly, but the information is direct from parties to the plot, who have confessed.

MR. POLUTSKY. Plot? Plot? Ah, really, my dear Pedro, is there really a plot, or rather, a—a scheme, that is, I should say, a murderous arrangement?

PEDRO. I'm afraid there is.

MR. POLUTSKY. And the count, that is, Count Jean, or rather, I should say, the great Jutrewski, is really at their head? Really, my dear Pedro, I must see his highness; that is, I must inquire, or rather—really, this must be adjusted before the count arrives. He is so independent, or rather so very independent that is—so damned independent—something will happen; something will happen.

PEDRO. The Czar will see no one. Orders have been given. Even I am refused admittance.

Enter DENNIS.

DENNIS. Whisht, ye divils, ye. Where's the boss? I'll see the Czar or die.

MR. POLUTSKY. Ah, really my dear friend, I——

DENNIS. Don't be giving me a bad name. I'm no friend of either ov ye devils. Don't be givin' me any of yer soft solder. I've a bit of information for the Czar that will surprise his iligant ears.

PEDRO. Away, you presuming fool! Do you think the Czar will speak with you? Away, before I call the guards and have you taken into custody.

DENNIS. Thry it, me bucko. Be aisy, or I may spoil that iligant mug of yours. [*Exit* PEDRO.

MR. POLUTSKY. I—I—really, gentlemen, don't quarrel.

Enter PEDRO *and guards.*

DENNIS. Phwat the divil is the matter wid ye? Ye act as if ye swallered a whale.

PEDRO. (*To guard.*) Remove him beyond the gates, and see that he does not return. (*Guards drag* DENNIS *off.*) [*Exit* MR. POLUTSKY.

Enter Police.

PEDRO. The orders of his imperial highness are that you all conceal yourselves about the chamber, and at my call charge upon the traitors. Shoot them if they attempt to escape. The time is at hand. Conceal yourselves. (*Hide all.*)

Enter COUNT JEAN JUTREWSKI *and* PAUL.

COUNT. I know his majesty will receive me, as I have come at his orders.

PAUL. Ah; so then you come most opportunely. His highness has great favors for the Jutrewski house. I hope, my dear count, that any ill-feeling you may have against the government may be set aside. Have patience and do nothing you may repent of.

COUNT. Many thanks for your well meant words, Paul, but I shall act as my pride and manhood demand, and so only.

PAUL. I must attend his highness. You will pardon my withdrawal.

COUNT. Most certainly. (*Exit* PAUL.) What can they all mean? All eyes upon me and all speak in a most guarded manner. Can aught be amiss? Am I expected

to make some new sacrifice? Well, I will be patient; but, yet, I am a man—a Pole, and shall assert my rights.

Enter ALEXANDER *hurriedly.*

ALEXANDER. Ah, you are here, thank God. I have found you, count, father.

COUNT. You here? Alexander, I have often cautioned you against coming to St. Petersburg. It will excite suspicion.

ALEXANDER. Suspicion? What do I care; now I come to warn you of the intention of the Czar. The time of trial has come. Our true feelings are known to the government and they suspect——

COUNT. Suspect what?

ALEXANDER. Treason, plotting. Come, come; do not appear today. It will be your ruin.

COUNT. I defy them all. I shall assert my rights, my loyalty to all that is right, and will show the Czar what my feelings truly are.

ALEXANDER. Hush, hush! You cannot. They will not let you assert yourself. Come for my sake; I beg you, come away, only for today.

COUNT. I cannot. I have been called. I shall appear and do my duty. (*Trumpet without. Doors open.*)

ALEXANDER. They come! They come! (*Procession appears.*)

PEDRO. See, they prepare for the attack.

COUNT. Go, go. You must not be seen here.

Enter CZAR *and attendants.*

PEDRO. Down with the traitors! (*Police close about the count, who is stabbed in the back.* ALEXANDER *rushes up stage to window. Springs upon sill.*)

ALEXANDER. In the tyrant's face, I shout defiance! (*Springs through window.*)

CZAR. He must not escape! Fire upon him!

ALICE. (*Rushing in. Stands in front of window.*) Take back that order! They fire only over my corpse!

(Curtain.)

ACT III.

(*Scene: The Polish encampment. Tent of Alexander. Mountains at back and left. Rocks and woods at right. Tent and camp fire in center.*)

FIRST SOLDIER. The struggle is useless. We had best take advantage of the offer made by the Czar.

SECOND SOLDIER. And what may his offer amount to?

FIRST SOLDIER. It's reasonable enough. He offers a free pardon to all who surrender before nightfall.

SECOND SOLDIER. And what to the prince, the only rightful ruler here?

FIRST SOLDIER. They do not speak of him. Let that be his affair.

ALL. Yes, yes!

SECOND SOLDIER. What? Surrender to the Russian dogs one of our noble born; brave as the eagle and still only a boy? For shame. I, for one, will never give in; never!

ALL SECOND PARTY. Never, never!

FIRST SOLDIER. The world is always full of fools who rush madly to their own destruction.

SECOND SOLDIER. What, do you mean me? Have a

care, or your traitor's heart may feel a pang sharper than your cowardice.

First Party. Cowards?

Second Soldier. That was my word, and I fear not to repeat it. I say again, cowards! Your services were not sought. When Alexander returned to his native land, pursued by Russian hounds, he did not seek our protection, but the faithful Polish hearts surrounded him, begged him to make a last stroke for his unhappy country. He led us on by our own choice, and now at the first hardship you speak of deserting. I call ye worse than cowards.

First Soldier. Down with the fool!

First Party. Yes, down with him. (*Rush at him.*)

Enter Alexander.

Alexander. And so—and so ye wrangle now amongst yourselves. Is it not enough that our best blood be claimed by Russian steel, but ye must strive against yourselves and thirst for one another's lives? Oh, men, oh, men, I wish I were a slave and not the most unhappy Polish prince.

Second Soldier. Forgive; forget our foolish act!

Alexander. Away, all; return to your rest. To-morrow holds work for all. Go, leave me. I would be alone. [*Exit all.*

Second Soldier. What orders?

Alexander. Post sentries on every hill; any movement of the Russian force report at once. Good night.

Second Soldier. Good night. [*Exit.*

Alexander. And so they tire of this hopeless fight. I, too, am sick at heart, but death I'll welcome as my

sweetest friend. If 'twere not for the people here, I'd lay me down tonight forever at rest. But one short year ago I was a boy, as wild and free as the untamed bird; tonight I feel that life is more than I can bear. On every side I'm pressed with doubt; I look ahead and see but blood, ruin, death—death for me, slavery for them. Oh, why will heaven throw life to such as I, while noble, happy men pray for the gift in vain. I would that I were not; I would I were not eight yet. I am with more than common energy of soul. (*Rises.*) Yes, more than common, and with that energy, I'll crush them yet.

Enter DENNIS.

DENNIS. Whist, me darlint, what the divil ails ye at all? Shure, ye look as if ye were preparing for yer own funeral.

ALEXANDER. I was thinking, Dennis. But what brings you?

DENNIS. Ah, shure it's a pleasant message. I have—ah—a lady—a most iligant creature begs to see his Excellency Alexander, and faith, it's meself that thinks it's a hard heart ye'd have to say no.

ALEXANDER. You should ascertain her message and let her go. I have no time for women's nonsense.

DENNIS. What? Ax a lady her raisons? Shure it's plain ye haven't had much to do wid the fair sex. Ax a woman? Faith, it's axin' her I'd be yet.

ALEXANDER. Receive her message and dismiss her. I can see no one tonight.

ALICE. (*Enter.*) You will see me. I am here.

ALEXANDER. (*With joy.*) Alice! (*Changed.*) Woman, what evil impulse sent you here? Dennis, you may go.

DENNIS. I thought so. [*Exit.*

ALICE. Alexander, I have come to bid you fly while yet there is time. You are completely surrounded by the Russian forces. If it were not for your position in this hill-encircled spot, which they cannot reach but by the narrow mountain path, they would charge upon you now and by force of numbers destroy you all.

ALEXANDER. I know all. There is no need to repeat to me what your fiendish work has done. Alice, what brings you here at such a time? If I must die, why not let me die in peace?

ALICE. What, die? You die? Oh Alexander, my hope, you shall not die! My love! My love! (*Falls on* ALEXANDER.)

ALEXANDER. Do you not realize your danger? Your presence here is treason to Russia; an act that only your life can atone for.

ALICE. Life, my life? What does it mean to me when you are in danger? Alexander, fly with me! I have arranged it all; we can pass unmolested out of the country. The way is clear and I am come to plead with you for your life.

ALEXANDER. You, plead for me? You, to whom I owe it all? Your public confession was heard by all; you plotted for my destruction, and now when your prayers are about to be answered you turn coward and wish to recall it. Go! go! before I learn to hate you!

ALICE. 'Tis false. 'Tis false, Alexander. I plotted, but, oh, before God, it was for your happiness—yours and mine. I wished to force you to quit Russia; then I could follow and meet you in a happier land. But my plans were all wrong; some unseen power worked against

me. I tried to save you, Alexander, but it was too late; you were lost, and I—I who worshiped you, was to blame. I drove, drove the one I loved, by my own act, into blood, danger, wretchedness.

ALEXANDER. Not only I, but all, all the faithful souls who cluster around me here. Oh, unhappy, most unhappy girl. (ALICE *clasps him.*) Away, away. Do not pollute me with your unnatural love. Go! go! ere I drive this dagger home to stop that false and plotting heart!

ALICE. (*On knees.*) Yes, stop the heart that beats for you alone. Alexander, why will you scorn my warning? I know that ere the morning comes the Russians shall devise some means to reach you and then, then the order is death to all. Oh, Alexander, I could see you die, but not like this. I cannot let you die alone upon this desolate hillside and know that your most loved of forms shall mold away uncovered from the rude and hateful throng. Alexander, fly; fly!

ALEXANDER. You plead in vain. I will no more. (*Rushes off stage.*)

ALICE. Alone, alone. He will not hear me; all my struggle is for nothing. I cannot live when he is gone—lost, destroyed, and all through me. It is my duty now to save him, though he despises, hates me. I shall save him still, even though it costs my most unhappy life.

[*Exit.*

SECOND SOLDIER. (*Enter.*) General, general, where are you?

ALEXANDER. (*Enter.*) I am here; what is amiss?

SECOND SOLDIER. The movements of the enemy are most suspicious. The forces have divided; one body

moves toward the town, the others are busy at some work about the lakes at the mountain top.

ALEXANDER. Keep a sharp lookout, and report in an hour. (*Shots without.*) What's that? Shots at this time mean mischief.

SECOND SOLDIER. I will see the cause and return at once. [*Exit.*

ALEXANDER. This is what she spoke of—some new movement. What it will bring, heaven alone knows.

Enter SECOND SOLDIER.

SECOND SOLDIER. They have charged upon the town, and set fire to the dwellings.

ALEXANDER. And the object? Can you see what they wish to do?

SECOND SOLDIER. To cut off our last hope of supplies. They doubtless fear that we may reach the town and so gain provisions.

ALEXANDER. Inhuman dogs! Would they not destroy us with a single blow? With thrice our forces they fear to meet us, but make war upon defenseless women and children.

Enter FIRST SOLDIER.

FIRST SOLDIER. The women and children rush from the town, fleeing from the violence of the Russian dogs.

ALEXANDER. Go! Go! Send out our best and truest men to bring the wanderers in. (*To* SECOND SOLDIER.) Prepare my tent for the helpless and defenseless women; call out our men and stand in readiness for further orders. Let all be still, but ready for work at an instant's notice. [*Exit* FIRST SOLDIER.

SECOND SOLDIER. All will be attended to at once.

[*Exit into tent.*

Enter DENNIS, *with children.*

DENNIS. Be the powers of Moses, if I ever felt so like a father before. (*Sees child with pistol.*) Oh, ye divil ye, I'll skin ye alive if ye touch that again. (*Child cries.*) Arrah, whist, me darlint, be aisy wid ye. Shure I wouldn't harm a hair of yer head.

ALEXANDER. You, Dennis?

DENNIS. Yes, it's meself and the children. Ah, yer excellency, but it's the quare world we're in. There on the hill beyant I found the darlints hiding wid divil a soul near them to look after the angels. Faith, it's meself that'd like to be after skinning the divils who burned their homes.

ALEXANDER. Take charge of my quarters, Dennis, and let the children sleep there. Watch them closely; God only knows what noble deeds are yet for them to do.

[*Exit* ALEXANDER.

DENNIS. So I'm to be nurse! My, but this is a drop for me—from a lieutenant to a nursery governess. (*Child takes up gun.*) Oh, ye young divil, I'll murder ye entirely. (*Child looks frightened. Drops gun.*) Ah, there, don't be frightened, me rosebud; shure it's only a way I hov. Faith, it's meself that would like to have twenty-five golden-headed boys like yerself. Come now, lay down there right on the prince's own bed. I'll watch ye like a mother.

Enter ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER. No, let them pray first. Heaven must listen to such prayers as theirs.

CHILD. Oh, yes, mamma always makes me pray. (*All kneel;* DENNIS *in center.* ALEXANDER *stands.*)

DENNIS. My, but I'm getting to be the moral man—from a soldier to a Sunday school teacher. Well, me bucko, ye'd best say what ye know, for I'm afeard I've forgot the exact style.

CHILD. "Little Jesus, meek and mild,
Thou wast once a homeless child;
Grant that it may ever be
Thy will to give a home to me."

[*Exit* ALEXANDER.

DENNIS. Now get to bed, every mother's son of ye. (*Children enter tent.* DENNIS *sits at entrance. Sings. Shots without.*)

DENNIS. What the divil is thot? Be the piper thot played befoor Moses, they're up to some new divilment now.

Enter FIRST SOLDIER.

FIRST SOLDIER. I tell you, they're up to mischief. They never looked upon this struggle but as a lawless mob, and are determined to end it by any means.

SECOND SOLDIER. They are at work at the lake.

FIRST SOLDIER. Nothing can be done there. (DENNIS *gets up.*)

DENNIS. Faith, I'd like to take a look at them meself. (*Takes glass.*) Shure, it's a quare way they have entirely.

SECOND SOLDIER. They are tearing away something.

DENNIS. Be the holy St. Patrick! Ye murdherin' divils! I—

BOTH SOLDIERS. What?

FIRST SOLDIER. What do you see?

DENNIS. Divil a thing.

SECOND SOLDIER. Confound it, how you startled me!

DENNIS. Whist, not a breath. Do ye mind the lake there is at the very top of the hill?

BOTH. Yes!

DENNIS. They cannot reach us here only by the narrow path, and that would be bad business for them.

SECOND SOLDIER. Well, what do you see?

DENNIS. Howld yer whistle. Let me look again.

Enter ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER. To work at once! Alarm the camp; let all stand in readiness to move at a moment's notice. Move! Move! men; not a moment to spare. They have opened a gulf up to the lake and will no doubt let down the waters upon us. Away! Away! You are too late! Dennis, the children! (*Water rushes on. Each clasps child and rushes off stage. All follow.*)

ALEXANDER. Fly, fly to the mountains all, all! Ah, welcome death, I'll not flee from you; better thus to die than fall prey to Russian hate! (*Shot. He falls; drags himself to tree. Enter* ALICE *on horse.*)

ALICE. Alexander! (*Jumps into water. Grasps* ALEXANDER.)

(Curtain.)

ACT IV.

(Same as Act II.)

Gretchen. Dear, dear, what a world. There's the Princess Alice married and poor Alexander—Lord only knows where. Oh, that's the way with us girls. The only way to get us is to take us while you can, for when you're ready, we won't.

Enter Pedro.

Pedro. Well, so I find you at last. Why do you run away from me?

Gretchen. Well, it's not because I want your company, though you don't appear to know it; but since you're here, I've news for you.

Pedro. News? What?

Gretchen. The Princess Alice is married to——

Pedro. Yes, and it's high time you were.

Gretchen. I—marriage appears to be the favorite topic today. But excuse me; I'd rather not.

Pedro. What, you will not marry me?

Gretchen. I'm very much obliged, but I'd rather not.

Pedro. Well, I shall have you or I'll——

Gretchen. Take that instead. (*Slaps.*) Don't you dare speak to me again.

[*Exit* Gretchen, *followed by* Pedro.

Enter Mr. Polutsky *and* Miss Kelner.

Mr. Polutsky. Now, my dear Miss Kelner, do sit down here. I—I wish to explain; or rather—that is, I really—my dear madam, I have something to say.

Miss Kelner. Oh, goodness, is dot possible? What a funny man.

Mr. Polutsky. Funny? Funny? Ah—really, Miss Kelner, I'm surprised; or rather—I should say—that is —I mean—I am greatly in earnest!

Miss Kelner. Is dot possible? (*Aside.*) What a funny man.

Mr. Polutsky. Yes. Just so, Miss Kelner. I have come here today to speak, or, I should say, to avow—ah, really, Miss Kelner, I wish to declare my love.

Miss Kelner. Goodness, what a funny man! Vell, I guess I must find that girl. Gretchen! Gretchen! (*Calls.*)

Mr. Polutsky. Ah—ah—really, my dear Miss Kelner, I must insist; or—or rather, I—that is, I must urge —I—I—Miss Kelner, or, I love you.

Miss Kelner. Goodness, is dot possible?

Mr. Polutsky. Possible? Possible? Ah, really, Miss Kelner, what do you say?

Miss Kelner. Me? Vell, vell—really, I guess yes.

Mr. Polutsky. Really, Miss Kelner. (*Embrace.* Gretchen *rushes in.*)

Gretchen. Did you call? (*Exit* Mr. Polutsky *and* Miss Kelner.) Well, if this keeps up, we'll have to engage a priest by the year. But bless me if I wasn't frightened! I never thought a proposal could scare me.

Enter Dennis.

Dennis. Whist, ye divil ye. Don't breathe; don't breathe! Don't wink, or I'm ruined.

Gretchen. What? You, Dennis? Where is the master?

DENNIS. Well, that's just what I'd like to know. But there; I suppose the haythins have made short work of him, and be the powers, it's meself that will have to quit the country entirely. But sure, I couldn't go till I'd seen your beautiful self again.

GRETCHEN. He's getting the symptoms! See here, young man, if you don't want to be married in twenty-four hours, leave the house at once; it's haunted. Matrimony is raging, and it's contagious.

DENNIS. Well, faith, I wouldn't mind if you don't.

GRETCHEN. God help him; he's got the infection. I warned him too late.

DENNIS. Well?

GRETCHEN. Well, you're not cross-eyed nor bow-legged. You can't talk straight, but that's not so bad; you're a good fellow, anyway. [*Exit both.*

Enter COUNTESS.

COUNTESS. Alone, alone with all our wealth—with all the friends who once clustered about us, I am left alone to bear my grief. (*Weeps. Enter servant.*) Close the outer gates, Nicholas, and see that all the doors are secured. You may leave this window open; I will close it myself. Send Gretchen. (*Exit servant.*) Ah, I fear that even Gretchen will grow weary of this dull life.

Enter GRETCHEN.

GRETCHEN. Ah, Countess, you are in that melancholy mood again; I fear you will kill yourself with useless repining.

COUNTESS. And if I do, 'twill bring me nearer those

I love. But you are bright, Gretchen. Did your letter bring uncommon good news?

GRETCHEN. No, not the letter. Oh, Countess, Dennis is here.

COUNTESS. Ah, yes. So—so you little goose, you have let your heart get away. Ah, Gretchen, I have learned to love you in my sorrow; you have been faithful as no one else could be. I shall have you still remain.

GRETCHEN. But he—he cannot stay; the police would seize him.

COUNTESS. And will you leave me, Gretchen, with not one hand to soothe my breaking heart? But yes, go; go where the air is free to serf and sire; where men may think, and thinking still may live. Forget this land of misery and woe and never—even in silent bowers, breathe it's most unhappy name.

Enter ALICE.

ALICE. I would that I might fly to such a home. Oh! Catherine, Countess, my heart is breaking.

COUNTESS. Oh, Alice; how you startled me!

ALICE. No words! No words! Is Alexander here?

CATHERINE. Here? No.

ALICE. Then where in this unhappy land has he found shelter?

CATHERINE. Ah, then you know——

ALICE. All; all. I jeopardized my honor to save him, and yet I failed. In the dead of night I rode into the Polish camp under the very guns of the Russian pickets, just as the awful flood rushed upon them. I drew him up behind me on my horse, and on through the night we fled. Through the rushing torrents, over the rugged

mountain paths; the trees swept by and seemed to bend as if to hide us from the foe. I felt that we were saved, and raised my eyes to heaven in thanks, when, as if by magic, we were surrounded and I—I knew no more.

CATHERINE. And Alexander? My boy, my boy.

GRETCHEN. Did they murder him?

ALICE. Would to God they had. They wished to force him to disclose his followers' names, and he—he refused. They placed him on the rack while I—I—oh, poor unhappy woman, prayed, begged, knelt—Catherine, Countess, I knelt in the dust and begged of those slaves whom I might crush with a single blow.

CATHERINE. But the end—the end?

ALICE. I cannot tell. Oh! shall I ever lose the horror of that sight—reeking in blood. I heard his moans, and yet he never cried for mercy. Ages it seemed when, lo! he burst the cruel ropes that bound him; he felled the guards about him like reeds before the winds, and he fled—fled I know not where.

CATHERINE. Alexander, Alexander!

ALICE. Oh, why do you not curse me? Why do you not strike me dead here at your feet? Catherine, Catherine, is there a God, and yet I live, I breathe? Is there no power in heaven to crush me into nothingness?

CATHERINE. Ah, poor child; poor child! Go, Alice, to my room; and you, Gretchen, go with her. He will come here, and I must see him alone.

ALICE. Yes; yes. If he should come and find me here he would not enter. My God! My God! [*Exit.*

CATHERINE. Go, Gretchen. Go and pray. Pray. Call all the servants and bid them pray—pray—pray. (*Exit*

GRETCHEN.) Alexander, my son, my son! (*Drops head on table. Sound without.* ALEXANDER *appears at window.*)

ALEXANDER. Countess, Countess! Mother! (*Falls.*)

CATHERINE. My boy; my boy! (*Embraces* ALEXANDER.) What is it, Alexander; are you in pain?

ALEXANDER. Pain? If this be pain, then never knew I pain before. My very soul is steeped in agony. Stay, stay; don't let your hand rest so heavily upon me. It causes me unspoken pain!

CATHERINE. Is this my pride—my Alexander?

ALEXANDER. Yea; yea, they have unmanned me; left me like a babe to weep at every pang. Oh, Countess, this is hell itself. I can but wait; my brain is mad. I cannot —cannot hold my mind.

CATHERINE. Water! Water! that I may wash that agony from his face.

ALEXANDER. Ha, ha, ha! Do you not see her? It is Alice! She is going, going—Alice! Alice! I will not be angry; come back! Alice! Alice! I—I. Ah, 'tis you! How came I here?

Enter GRETCHEN.

CATHERINE. Ah, his mind wanders. Gretchen, I shall go mad. Alexander, would you see Alice?

ALEXANDER. Alice? Alice? Who says she is false! It is a lie! A damned and selfish lie! Ah, do you not remember, Alice, how we played in childhood? Why do you not speak? Alice—Alice, I will forgive. Come back, come back. I—

CATHERINE. My boy, do not talk so.

ALEXANDER. Oh, God, lay not your hands upon me! My every limb is but a seething mass of pain. I—hark,

hark—what is that sound? It is—it is—I've heard it oft before.

GRETCHEN. The soldiers! Countess, what will we do?

CATHERINE. He must hide in the secret closet.

ALEXANDER. Hide! No! Kill me. I cannot meet them now; I am unmanned.

CATHERINE. Come; come.

ALEXANDER. No, I'll remain. I'll cleave at least one other Russian heart before I'm numbered with their slain.

Enter ALICE.

CATHERINE. Alexander, I beg. (*Kneels.*) They cannot find you there.

GRETCHEN. Oh, go, go! [*Exit* ALEXANDER.

PEDRO. (*Without.*) Open, in the name of the Czar. (*Breaks open door.*) We come for the escaped prisoner, Alexander. He is here.

COUNTESS. He is not here!

PEDRO. Your very words betray you. He is in this house, and I will find him.

ALICE. Stay! I say you shall not pass.

PEDRO. And I say I shall!

ALICE. You forget, dog, to whom you speak. Stand back, or I shall cast you down into the obscurity from whence I took you!

PEDRO. You cast me back! A disgraced princess; the mistress of a Polish upstart. Seize her, men!

Enter ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER. Seize her? You will have work before

you execute that shameful task. (*Soldier grasps* ALEXANDER, *and* PEDRO *stabs him.)*

PEDRO. Take that; and now my hate is satisfied.

ALICE. Dead! Dead! And so has ended all my hopes! Alexander, one look, one smile! Oh, tarry yet one moment, and I shall join you in the flight! Catherine, Countess, he is dead!

PEDRO. Woman—

Enter PAUL.

ALICE. What, you; the slave I raised from dark obscurity to power and pride—and this is my reward! But I myself will tear thee down! (*Springs at* PEDRO, *who stabs her.*)

PAUL. Fiend, what have you done! Away with him to the secret dungeons, and let the full weight of Russian law fall on his guilty head!

PEDRO. Mercy!

PAUL. Away! Away! Unhappy girl! Unhappy prince!

(*Curtain.*)

THE DUTY A MAN OWES TO HIMSELF

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TAKE heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."—I Timothy, 4:16.

These are the words of the aged man, Paul, to his young friend, Timothy. Timothy had dedicated himself to the care of humanity, but before he could care for humanity he must first care for himself. It was good counsel as well as good theology for Paul to say these words, for it is forever true that self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control are at the basis of all strong, manly, Christian lives.

The first and fundamental duty of every man in this world is to care for himself. It is a self-evident truth that a creature must live before it can act. "From this," says Herbert Spencer, "it is a corollary that the acts by which each maintains his own life must, speaking generally, precede in imperativeness all other acts of which he is capable. Ethics has to recognize this truth: that egoism must precede altruism." I know full well that we have duties toward others. "No man liveth unto himself." But the truth I want to make clear is that individualism must precede altruism. The care of oneself must precede care for others. You cannot be good and do good to another, unless you first be good and do good to yourself. By so much as you love yourself, by that much, and that much only, can you love your neighbor.

If there be not in you a high type of self-love, there cannot be in you a high type of neighbor-love; if you do not think right of yourself, you will never think right of others; if you do not struggle manfully for your own existence, and your own rights, you will never be in a condition to struggle manfully for the existence and rights of others. Man's fatal sin is the neglect of himself, for he who neglects himself disqualifies himself for service to others. He who harms himself by that act harms all who come in contact with him. On the other hand, he who enriches and ennobles himself enriches and ennobles every one who comes within the sphere of his influence. Emerson was right when he said:

"Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow
If thou another soul would reach;
It needs the overflowing heart
To give the life full speech.

"Think truly and thy thought
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly and thy word
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly and thy life
Shall be a great and noble creed."

It is forever true that "no life can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife and all life not be purer and stronger thereby."

Listen, my brother, my sister: Thyself, the care of thyself, is the one great trust that God has committed to thee. Man's primary responsibility to God is for himself. Every man shall give an account of himself to God. Before all things else I am responsible to God for myself. Fidelity to myself is therefore my first chief re-

ligious duty. The severest sentence that heaven's judgment will pronounce on some souls will be: "Thou hast destroyed thyself." The climax of sin's simpleness is the havoc and ruin it inflicts on the sinner. The curse of ill-gotten gain falls on the man who gets it. The wages of sin is death to the man who sins. The personal relation of every soul to God is one of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. Religion separates a man from everything and everybody and places him alone before the judgment seat of Christ. The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, insists on the separateness of every individual. When God gave His laws at Sinai, He gave them to individuals. They are written in the singular number. Man is addressed personally, separately, and not in the mass: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." Every man stands in his own separate individuality before God. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The solidarity of the race is a great fact and doctrine, but the separateness and individuality of each human soul is a greater fact and more solemn doctrine. I cannot merge my individuality into the multitude; I cannot sink myself in the mass; I cannot hide myself in the procession. Religion isolates each human soul from the mass and deals with each as a separate, distinct personality. Each man is taught to recognize his own worth, as a being related to the Most High God. Man is something more than a cog in a great machine. Man is not a means to an end; he is an end in himself.

Without this clear consciousness of self there can be no sense of personal freedom, and man will drift into fatalism or sink into Nervana, and thus lose the strongest incentives to the perfection of his character. To live

as God intended me to live, I must be conscious of myself; I must realize my personal freedom; I must have a true sense of my individual rights and duties and possibilities. My individual conscience must be free to elect my own course and determine my own destiny. Personal character is impossible without personal freedom. Progress in knowledge has come about by the assertion of one's own individuality. The men who have pioneered into new worlds of discovery and invention have done so by the exercise and assertion of their own, strong, healthy, virile personality. They consulted with themselves; they believed in themselves; they confided in their own judgments; they made their own precedents. Therefore, they broke away from the multitude and went out alone on their voyage of discovery.

Go over the list of men who have blessed the world with wider knowledge, purer faith, nobler reforms and you will find them men of strong individuality. They were self-contained men; they could stand on their own feet, think with their own brains, speak with their own tongues; they were men of self-esteem, yea, of self-esteem, for they had the witness in themselves that they were right and that their ways pleased God. The approval of their own conscience—that is, self-approval—kept them steadfast while the world hurled maledictions on them. It is high tribute to a man to say that he is self-contained.

Every great reform began as a protest from some individual conscience. Telemachus in Rome saw the awful wickedness of gladiatorial combats. Alone he threw himself into the arena as his protest against a public wrong; he lost his life but won the cause. The courage

and conscience of one man led the right to triumph over might. The right prevailed, because one man dared to be true to his own convictions and dared to stand alone.

"Do what thy manhood bids thee do,
From none but self expect applause;
He noblest lives and noblest dies
Who makes and keeps his self-made laws.

"And glancing down the range of years,
Fear not thy future self to see;
Resigned to life, to death resigned,
As though the choice were wrought in thee."

The duty of being one's self and not another needs emphasis. Each soul born into this world has its own distinct life, its own unique personality. It is unlike any other soul; it has its own special mission. Personality is the most divine thing in the world. It is God incarnate. To suppress or mutilate it is sacrilege; to give it freedom and expression is man's first and highest duty. I must be what God created me to be. I must apprehend that for which I have been apprehended. As Browning says: "Best be yourself, imperial, plain and true."

The phrase, "To thine own self be true," is the expression of a deep religious duty. You yourself are a part of God; you have it as a duty to reflect something of God in your character and conduct; you are a part of God manifest in the flesh; you are a revelation of God. The truer you are to yourself, the truer you are to God, in whose image you were created. If you fail to be what God intended you to be, you keep back the light and truth God intended should come into the world in you and through you. There is a deep divine significance in that saying of Paul: "They glorified God in me." In the

character and personality of Paul men saw something of God and were led to reverence him.

Each human life should be a miniature Christ—a miniature revelation of God. No one life can reveal divinity in its fullness, but each life can and should reveal something of divinity. No single raindrop can throw a complete bow across the heavens with a perfect arch. So let each human soul reflect and reveal what of God and truth it embodies or incarnates. Thus will God be revealed. One life will especially reveal His patience, another His gentleness, and another His joyfulness. He best reveals God who is true to his own individuality.

God and nature are revealed in the pine of the north as well as the palm of the south. The daisy has its revelation of color, as has the dahlia. The bird that flies, the beast that walks, the fish that swims, the worm that crawls—as well as the man who thinks—has its own life and revelation in this wide and wondrous universe. Each reveals God and nature only as each is true to itself. The cloud as well as the star, the worm as well as the angel, has its mission and place. "From life's minute beginning up at last to man," God is incarnate. "The name comes close behind a stomach cyst, the simplest of creation."

"I will not strive beyond my strength
To do what other men have done,
Nor lay my yard stick length by length
Along the life of anyone.

"My life shall out, what in it lies
Of hope, of strength, of sacred fire;
To make that clear to all men's eyes
Is my supreme, my sole desire.

"I am, and what I am I am,
Nor evermore could other be;
God shall not write me down a sham,
I'll own the name He giveth me."

Each human soul has his or her own truth to teach and place to fill. The soft-breathing flute is needed in the orchestra, as also is the blaring trumpet and sounding drum; the differing bells make the perfect chime; the perfection of the whole is attained only when each unit is at its best. The strongest individualism is necessary to the strongest socialism. The more diverse a people or nation are in their tastes, habits, modes of thought, the more complete and noble is the unity that results from their association.

As men ascend the scale of being they do not become more alike but more different. The great geniuses of the world were not cast in the same mold. Plato is not like Homer, Dante is different from Shakespeare, Millet does not follow Raphael, Augustine does not follow the footsteps of Athanasius. As men unfold, one man is argumentative—he proves everything; another is dogmatic—he affirms; another is poetic and speaks in pictures. We need logic as well as poetry. One man is bright and another is dull. The world needs both. Nature shows that God delights in diversity. If you try to be like somebody else instead of being yourself, you thwart God's purpose and derange His wise plans. If God wanted you to be somebody else, He would have made you other than you are—in which case you would not be. It is God Himself who is saying: "To thine ownself be true." To every man his work.

It is only through inspired personalities that divine

truth gets into the world. The larger the personality, the larger the truth that gets expression. The best gift a man makes to a cause is the gift of himself—provided he has made himself worth giving. It is only through noble personalities that noble truths find expression and noble reforms find realization. That noble musical composition, that magnificent painting on the canvas, that poem of power and beauty, that oration replete with eloquent wisdom, that deed of daring heroism, that reform that blessed a continent, are but the outward expressions of the great, strong, rich personality of singer, artist, poet, orator, hero and reformer behind them. That which gave Jesus His transcendent place and power in the earth as a teacher and reformer was His unique, divine personality.

The world's redeemers and reformers from the first until now were and are strong, rich personalities. History centres around a few great, earnest, heroic souls. Carlyle contended that the history of the world was mainly the history of a few great men. Emerson said that all history resolved itself into the biography of a few, stout, earnest persons. Froude taught that the object of history was to discover and make visible illustrious men. Great moral movements are never born of committees. If the building of the ark had been left to a committee, it would never have been built. When God wants to initiate some moral movement, He confides His purpose in some one man. This select soul sees it, broods over it, and becomes its devoted champion. Kindred spirits link themselves to him; then more rally to his standard. Finally a great host follows his banner, and the cause that began

in obscurity and obloquy ends in splendor of triumph. A great moral movement is simply the many rising to the high level and divine ideal of the one. Jesus saw a kingdom of heaven on earth. He saw it clear and beautiful, as a vision of God. A few others saw it dimly, then more clearly. Today more are seeing it and praying for it. Christianity, civilization, is simply the rising of mankind up to the heights of Jesus.

The single man who sees a divine truth and plants himself on it, and abides, becomes a reforming force to the whole world. Through such souls "God stooping shows sufficient of His light" for men in the dark to rise by, and they rise. In times of national crises a man like Lincoln comes forth with the mark of leadership on his brow, and men are glad to rally under his banner. The ringing tones of strength and wisdom are in his voice and men follow him because they feel that he has understanding of the times and knows what needs to be done. Great men are not the whole of life, but they are necessary to the highest life and noblest achievement. It is only when a Moses arises that mankind has the courage to leave the slavery of Egypt for the freedom of Canaan. The individual force of some one great soul has often turned the tide of a nation's life from despotism to liberty, from anarchy to order. Nothing much is accomplished in this world without able leadership. We should rejoice in the superior talents and attainments of men who are above us; they are the pioneers of reform; they are our full-grown brothers; they are prophetic of what we shall be; they beckon us up the heights. Where they stand we shall stand.

" 'Tis in the advance of individual minds
That the slow crowd should ground their expectations
Eventually to follow; as the sea
Waits ages in its bed till some one wave
Of all the multitudinous mass extends
The empire of the whole, some feet perhaps,
Over the strip of sand which could confine
Its fellows so long time; thenceforth the rest,
Even the meanest, hurry in at once,
And so much is clear gained."

All that we have considered goes to show the duty of self-culture, self-discipline, self-control, self-reliance, self-perfection. Religion teaches every man to realize his worth as a child of God, an heir of immortality. It teaches self-reverence, for it says to every man: "The kingdom of God is within you." "Ye are the temple of the holy ghost." It bids man make the most and best of himself. The best thou canst do is the service God requires of thee. He who fails in the perfecting of his character, fails where failure is most fatal. Self-culture cannot be too strongly commended in young and old alike. In it lies the essence and acme of Christian morality. Self-culture, rightly understood, is the perfection of one's character. Noble character benefits the whole world. Character is moral force. There is no moral force without it.

We have been taught so much to care for others that we have almost forgotten that we owe a duty to ourselves. We need to be reminded that self-love, self-care, self-protection, are religious duties. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, etc.," "Take heed to yourselves," "Keep yourselves in the love of God," "Take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently," are the exhortations that need emphasis. There is danger that we may have to take up

that old lament: "They made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard I have not kept."

In the command, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," Jesus gives self-love as high a place as neighbor-love. Unless you love yourself aright, you can never love your neighbor aright. You must seek the highest things for yourself, else you will never be in a position to seek the highest things for your neighbor. The divine law: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," is in the same direction. If your judgment of what is best for you is wrong, then what you do for others will be harmful instead of helpful. You must have a just and right conception of what is due to yourself, and what is best for yourself, before you can begin to render what is just and right and best to others. As thou lovest thyself, so wilt thou love thy neighbor. You must love yourself nobly in order to love your neighbor nobly. The practical conclusion of it all is: We should give more thought to the cultivation of the divine light in our own souls.

If Jesus was a socialist, He was also an individualist. He came to save society, but He came also to save the individual. No one ever taught the worth of the individual as Jesus did. He went after the one lost sheep. The one thing of supreme worth in the universe is the individual human soul. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose himself? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? The wisest thing you can do, my brother, is to take Christ's estimate of your soul's worth and give diligent heed to its salvation.

Next to reverence for God should be self-reverence. He who reverences himself as a child of God, an heir of God, will have within himself one of the strongest incen-

tives to walk worthy of God. That is a noble passage in the writings of Milton when he teaches that a man should hold himself in reverence and due esteem, both for the dignity of God's image upon him and for the price of his redemption which he thinks is visibly marked on his forehead. This conception of his relation to God, he thinks, would keep a man from the pollution and debasement of sin and incite him to consider himself "a fit person to do the noblest and godliest deeds."

The recovery of selfhood, self-respect, self-reverence, self-reliance, is the great need of multitudes today. The most difficult to win back to manhood and to God are those who have sinned so long and so low that they despair of themselves. The keenest contempt a man can suffer is self-contempt. The most poignant shame is to be ashamed of one's self. Tennyson rightly put into the mouth of Guinevere the words: "I must not scorn myself." Self-scorn and self-depreciation sink the soul into gulfs so deep and dark that recovery is almost impossible.

My brother, my sister, consider seriously what you owe to yourself. Hear God's voice saying to you through this sermon: "Take heed to thyself." It is your first duty to make the best and most of yourself. The best thou canst be is the task that God assigns to thee. It is your duty to cultivate your powers to the highest pitch of excellence and devote them to the highest use and service. To this end go home and get alone with yourself and with God. Take yourself in hand—kindly, wisely, thoroughly. Examine yourself; talk to yourself; pray for yourself. By the light of God's truth see yourself as you are, and by His grace make yourself what He would have you be. Oh, that you might have a vision of what

God meant you to be, and that you might apprehend that for which you have been apprehended of God.

"My God, permit me not to be
A stranger to myself and Thee."

PATRIOTISM

PATRIOTISM

MAN is a lover of freedom. God made him free. The desire for liberty is the strongest instinct in his nature. History is the record of a ceaseless conflict for the assertion, maintenance, and increase of this inalienable prerogative. All the efforts of tyrants to crush out liberty have only aroused resistance, keen and intense, until it culminated in those destructive revolutions in which torrents of blood were poured out in defense of man's birthright.

Though a lover of freedom, man is also a lover of order and justice. His own unquestionable right to the blessings teaches him to recognize and respect the claims of his fellowman and of the Almighty God who made him. Conscience is awakened. Solemn duties clamor for acknowledgment. Some means must be provided to protect the weak. Thus, from a brief analysis of human nature we deduce the necessity of government.

The experience of all nations confirms this conclusion. The belief that freedom and anarchy can exist side by side is felt to be an iridescent dream. Hence, go back as far as you will in the history of peoples and you will find no race or tribe without some kind of government. Men cannot live in isolation, and attempts to stifle social instincts issue in savagery, anarchy and moral ruin. The strength of social needs confirms the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; it dignifies and justifies the spirit of patriotism.

No man, however, can be truly patriotic who is unwilling to make sacrifices rather than betray the cause of truth and justice. Patriotism is not genuine unless in harmony with the eternal principles underlying human life and destiny. Hence, there is a higher love than that of country for all are fellow-citizens in the one great kingdom of God, where patriotism is a struggle to elevate humanity to the height intended by the Creator. This is the deepest and most essential patriotism. It is fundamental. On this foundation must all other kinds of patriotism rest.

Yet, notwithstanding the imperfections, cruelties and injustice of the ruling powers, men have been found so attached to the land that bore them as to sacrifice everything in its defense. Witness Regulus released from a Carthaginian prison that he may go to Rome and influence his countrymen to continue the war; and, in the event of failure, bound by his sacred honor to return to captivity, he enters the senate. All eyes are fixed on him. He can speak the word that will secure his liberty. But with a burst of passionate eloquence he implores the senators not to think of his fate, but to prosecute with relentless activity a war that is on the eve of being crowned with victory. He gains his end; he redeems the pledge of a Roman consul; he offers his hand to Carthaginian bonds and returns to undergo torture and death. What but the fires of patriotism burning in their breasts induced the immortal 300 to lay down their lives at Thermopylæ? What other spirit moved the French to convert all Europe into a mighty camp in order to satisfy the insatiable ambition and the lust of conquest surging like fire in the veins of the great Napoleon?

Thus self-devotion was too often exercised in behalf of a sovereign and a cause unworthy of loyalty. It was in defense of nations that amply protected the citizen, but was pitiless and cruel to the weak and lowly, whom they blotted from the book of humanity; nations aiming only at material advancement, bent on gaining supremacy by any means, trampling down the weak, disregarding international law and the inalienable rights of man, carried away by the idolatry of success and the glorification of power and wealth; guilty of a thousand acts of treachery, hypocrisy, and immeasurable greed. If, under conditions so far removed from our ideals, patriotism puts before us the irresistible eloquence of heroic examples, the contagious nobility of devotion to country and zeal for its perpetuity, what proportions should it assume in the soul of the American whose country is the grandest offspring of time, the survival of whatever is best, the establishment of a government of the people and for the people and by the people? Patriotism must be rational and moral as well as intense; it can be enduring only when founded, like ours, on morality and religion; it receives the highest sanction when the nation is worthy of devotion.

Therefore, none have greater reason to love their country than we; for fair though she be in every attribute of greatness—the brightest jewel in the crown of time, a land bursting with exuberant life and fertility, laden with mighty forests, traced with silvery streams, rich with gold-filled mountain chains, unassailable by any foe, unconquerable on land and invincible on the sea, protected by the vigilant devotion of her sons—it is not these, not the pride of power and wealth that stirs our

hearts; not the material advantages of geographical extension, not the matchless resources — for nations expand in vain if the citizen remains small and man grows vile—but it is the quality of the manhood we have developed, the impetus given to the great cause of liberty and equality, undying faith in the principles of popular government and universal education. It is the stimulus to noble effort and grand achievement, the most complete possession of civil, political and religious freedom the world has ever seen; respect for religion, morality; justice for all that is noble, elevating and good—all that makes for human progress.

Friends, ours is a land of rational liberty; a land where character establishes the standard of worth; a law of unequaled opportunity for youth and ambition, for intelligence and industry; a land where full play is granted to the best powers of the soul. There is no large standing army, no oppressive taxation, no unequal law, no menace of revolutions. Our advance has been along peaceful lines and prosperity has followed obedience and respect for law. Mere conquest and lawless acquisition never had any attraction for our fathers. Military rule has been foreign to our traditions and to our fundamental principles of government, for the citizen who makes the laws can be trusted to obey and enforce them without the aid of bristling battalions. We have extended the hand of welcome to the oppressed of every land, and invited the disinherited of fortune and of fatherland to sit down at the banquet of civilization which America has prepared for mankind.

How great was the surprise and disappointment of those scoffers who, at the outbreak of the civil war pre-

dicted the downfall of the republic and the end of popular government; who imagined that the commercial spirit had dried up the sap of patriotism and that a nation of shopkeepers and business men could not rise to the moral grandeur of high principles! With amazement they saw her young manhood pouring forth by tens of thousands at the first summons of duty. From every town and hamlet they came, and to the beat of drums re-echoed the steady tramp of patriots, just as in '76 the sires of this same blood rose to the call of freedom. Think of the issues that lay in the balance at the time of this great struggle—the very existence of the nation; the union of the states; the future life of the country. Benjamin Franklin had well said: "Though united we might defy the world, divided we should fall an easy prey to conquest from abroad, strife and revolution at home." On the issue of that war hung the future of liberty for the world, the subversion of a government whose failure meant the retrogression of the cause of humanity for one hundred years. But, thank God! the sun that rose at Appomattox saw but one country and one people under one flag.

Follow the fortunes of one of those humble heroes of the civil war. See him in the palmy days of peace, the quiet, upright, law-abiding citizen; the simple man of the people, whose vote and voice were dedicated to the right. He hears the call and it electrifies him. What though it means separation from home and loved ones; he must make the sacrifice for his country, convinced that for the high-minded an opportunity to do right is a duty. Years roll by and, after an honorable career in the army, he returns with the maimed and martyred relics of his com-

mand. His party seeks a standard-bearer in a close political campaign. He is the man to carry the party to victory. Eulogized in the convention, his past deeds rehearsed for an admiring and enthusiastic throng, he appears among the delegates who have nominated him for an office that may well arouse a generous ambition. What a hush comes over the assembly. Instead of a speech of thanks and acceptance he declines the proffered honor because devotion to the right has always been the passion of his soul, and he is now too far advanced in life to exchange his principles and his independence for the success of a cause to which he could never give his heart. His was the spirit that framed the soul-stirring sentiment: "I would rather be right than president." Such patriotism, refusing no sacrifice and led away by no false ambition, is fearless, unshaken, dominated by principle superior to mere success, prepared to surrender prominence and power, preferring to be unsullied rather than successful. Friends, it is never practiced in vain.

Do you ask the results of that civil conflict? Do you ask what it was all worth—that breaking of hearts and disrupting of homes, the loss of fortune, the graves on every hillside, the tears in every eye, mourning in every household? It was a never-to-be-forgotten lesson in patriotism, to be cherished by posterity as long as fidelity lives in the hearts of men. It drew closer the bonds of friendship and buried forever sectional hate; it brought emancipation to the slave and secured existence to the nation; it guaranteed liberty to the whole world, for had this republic then gone down to ruin the spirit of progress would have suffered a mighty eclipse. To-day we

stand invincible and the spirit of democracy is triumphant.

But now that peace reigns supreme are there no clouds on the horizon? Do no perils beset our path? That were an ideal experience unknown to any human institution. There are dangers that threaten our nation. Our enemies are the buyers and sellers of votes; those who walk in the path of bribery and corruption, who kneel before the idol of avarice and greed. Our enemies are the party slave, the vulgar demagogue, the venal editor Not until men cease to be reckless of the means employed to win may we draw in our sails and float peacefully down the stream of security.

I have unwavering faith in my country, unbounded hope in her future, in the honor of my countrymen, in humanity, in Almighty God. I feel that as He has, with unfailing fidelity, guided her destiny in the past, so He will direct her course in the future—with prosperity unbroken and success unsurpassed, with glory augmented and patriotism undimmed.

O, Mighty Father of nations, Bestower of all good gifts, hear the cry of Thy suppliant children and hearken to our prayer for this blessed land of possibilities—that the spirit of true patriotism may live, flourish and endure.

SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

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MY dear friends: In our discussion of "Socialism and Christianity" we will do well at the outset to learn the meaning of these terms

The word "socialism" came into existence in the year 1835, and was coined to designate that reactionary movement against the individualism which immediately preceded it.

James Russell Lowell says: "Socialism means, or wishes to mean, co-operation and community of interests, sympathy; the giving to the hands, not so large a share as to the brain, but a larger share than hitherto, in the wealth they must combine to produce; in short, the practical application of Christianity to life, and has in it the secret of an orderly and benign reconstruction."

W. D. P. Bliss, in his "Handbook on Socialism," says: "Socialism is the fixed principle, capable of infinite and changing variety of form, and only gradually to be applied, according to which the community should own land and capital collectively and operate them co-operatively for the equitable good of all."

The Century dictionary defines socialism as "any theory or system of social organization which would abolish entirely or in great part the individual effort and competition on which modern society rests, and substitute for it co-operative action; would introduce a more perfect and equal distribution of the products of labor, and would make land and capital, as the instruments

and means of production, the joint possession of the members of the community."

There are really three great varieties of socialism:

(1) Christian socialism affirms that the teachings of Christ are social and when applied to modern life would transform all social organizations. This group of socialists is divided into two classes:

(a) Those who would combine social labors with their daily employment.

(b) Those who maintain that the sole purpose of Christ's mission was the social redemption of humanity.

(2) Scientific socialists or socialists of the chair who assert that the political economy of the past has been deductive and therefore unscientific; then proceed along inductive lines and endeavor by a minute examination of social institutions to form the basis for a new social science.

(3) State socialists would have all implements owned by the state; the community would control and direct all industrial functions and all men would be employees of the community.

Having defined socialism and noted the three widely different forms in which it exists, I propose to give three quotations from three modern and well-known socialistic writers, that we may better approach the relation between socialism and Christianity. I take the first extract from Mrs. Lynn Linton's popular novel, "The True History of Joshua Davidson." Speaking of the hero of her story she says: "No man was ever more convinced than he that sin and misery are the removable results of social circumstances, and that poverty, ignorance, and class distinction consequent, are at the root of all the

crimes and wretchedness afloat.'' My second extract is from Mr. Edward Bellamy's ''Looking Backward.'' This is the nineteenth century looked at from the vantage ground of the year 2000: ''In your day''—the day in which we are living—''fully nineteen-twentieths of the crime, using the word broadly to include all sorts of misdemeanors, resulted from the inequality in the possessions of the individuals.'' My last quotation is from Mrs. Annie Besant's recently published autobiography. ''Whence comes sin?'' she asks, and this is her answer: ''Evil comes from ignorance—ignorance of physical and moral facts, primarily from ignorance of physical order. . . . The root of all is poverty and ignorance. Educate the children and give them a fair wage for fair work in their maturity, and crime and poverty will gradually diminish and ultimately disappear. Make the circumstances good and the results will be good.''

And now, with these extracts in our mind, let us turn to the New Testament: ''Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!'' said Jesus, ''for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also.'' ''Out of the heart''—the 'heart,' not 'social circumstances'—''come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts . . . '' all the things, indeed, ''which defile the man.'' ''The kingdom of God is among you.'' ''The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy ghost.''

So then in this double set of sayings—one from the New Testament, the other from the socialistic writers

whose books I have quoted—the reorganization of society is aimed at. Both endeavor to bring a greater diffusion of virtue, intelligence and power to men; both deal with the same problem of evil; but this problem of evil is looked at from two different points of view. Socialism affirms: "If man is bad, it is because his circumstances are bad, and if you want to put him right you must begin by putting them right." On the other hand it is replied: "No; that is only part of the truth, and the least important part, too. If man is bad, the seat of mischief is in himself; and therefore the starting point of all true reformation must be the individual. Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also."

Dr. Abbott says: "I do not maintain that intelligent socialism disregards private character; nor is it true that intelligent Christianity—the Christianity which follows the teachings of the Master—disregards social conditions. But it is true that the social reformer puts the emphasis on the conditions; the Christian disciple puts the emphasis on the individual character."

Socialism affirms that happiness depends primarily on circumstances; that men in the mass are what their circumstances make them. Now I venture to affirm that that is not true neither scientifically nor historically.

(a) It is not scientifically true. Take any plant or animal, and ask a scientist what are the determining factors in its life's history. He will tell you they are two. There is first what he calls "the nature of the organism;" and, secondly, "the nature of the conditions." And he will further probably tell you that the former is the more powerful factor of the two. Now, the same may be said of the moral life of man, but with this im-

portant difference: That man possesses a power which the plant or the animal does not possess—of making his environment at the same time that it is making him (Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World"), so that in his case "the nature of the conditions counts for less even than it does in the case of the plant or animal." Judge, then, of the truth of the statement of the socialist. For what does it mean but this: That environment is everything, and the nature of the organism nothing; that all depends on the conditions under which the original life-force is developed, and nothing upon the character of that force itself. Could there be a more patent absurdity?

(b) Not less decisive is the appeal to history. We have seen that socialism aims to bring happiness to men by improving their environment—better homes, increase in wages, cleaner streets, abundance of labor, a few works of art. It is all very well for socialism to tell us what these things will bring to pass by and by; but what is the verdict of the past? Take, for example, the history of the great Roman civilization. It gave to us a system of laws of which, perhaps, it is not affirming too much to say that it has left its imprint upon the statute book of almost every civilized community since. It gave to us a literature without a knowledge of which no man's education even at the present day is considered complete. It fostered a love of beauty which not only built for itself magnificent structures that, even in their ruins, remain to this day at once the delight and despair of the architect, but which spent itself in the adornment of even the commonest utensils of daily life. All this, and much more than this, the great Roman civ-

ilization wrought. And what was the outcome of it? What, I mean, was its outcome among the very classes by whom and for whom these things were secured? Read the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans. "But," you ask, "was Paul an impartial judge?" Then hear Paul's critic, Matthew Arnold:

> "On that hard Pagan world disgust
> And secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell."

The falsity of this half-truth that man is made by his "circumstances" is demonstrated by a thousand facts daily. A man may be a friend of Jesus Christ and turn out a Judas Iscariot; he may go straight from that fair, pure presence to a traitor's and a suicide's grave. Do all the saints live in the mansions and all the sinners in the slums? Does not the devil of uncleanliness take up his abode in the home of the millionaire as well as in the cottage of the poor man? Socialism aims at "moving the masses to a cleaner style." God help them to do it. But what is the use if they don't first cleanse the human animal? "Behind the social problem lies the problem of the individual; the soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul," says Henry George. That is the greatest affirmation of Christianity. Here in the individual it finds the pivot, the centre, the hinge of all true reformation. The man, not society, must be your unit. Make social salvation, in its widest and largest sense, your goal. Individual salvation must be your starting-point.

And this is why socialism can never be a substitute for Christianity. Socialism busies itself with the order-

ing of our social and economic life and seeks the welfare of the community through a reconstruction of that life; it lives and moves and has its being among the things that are visible and material. "It appeals primarily," as Abbot clearly shows, "to the man in his lower nature." To-day in our city socialism is saying to the poor, the unemployed: "Come and eat, come and eat," and affirms that such is their religion. Christianity answers: "No. What people want primarily is not a table spread to eat, but a table spread to work." Seldom do people want a table spread to eat. Such "free lunches" are generally a public calamity. Christianity puts the kingdom of God into a man's heart and then he will earn his own dinner. Christianity puts courage where despair once was, virtue instead of impurity, and a desire to earn rather than depend on the bounty of those who give. Socialism makes the change of man's circumstances practically his religion. It pays little attention to conversion, repentance, faith or the church. True, many socialists are genuine Christians, but the vast majority are irreligious, atheistic. Furthermore, there is in Christianity a power to create moral manhood, to produce such a dynamic change in society as will leave the socialistic programme far behind and far below, and bring to pass, even in history, things that have not entered the heart of man to conceive.

IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE?

IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE?

MY dear friends: If Christianity is true, the importance of accepting it is unutterably great. Christianity claims to be a revelation to us from the Creator and Governor of the Universe, the Supreme God, through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by whom He made the worlds and all they contain. If this claim is well founded, the acceptance of this revelation is man's highest duty.

There never was a time when so large a proportion of the world's population had faith in some form of Christianity as to-day; never a time when there were so many Christian churches; never a time in which there were so many true and earnest Christians; never a time when the active defenders of Christianity were more able, more learned, more numerous.

But while all this is true, there are many, both among the learned and unlearned in this country, who deny the truths of Christianity. Many of these in their social relations are upright and benevolent, with irreproachable characters. You will remember that in classic history there were some non-Christians who appeared, as regards conduct and disposition, to have been "almost Christians;" and there are in our day men who maintain an adverse position towards the truth of our religion and yet are men who have deepened our love for all that is great in conduct and pure in thought, and who in their stainless lives and noble utterances give the unconscious

testimony of minds "naturally Christian." We most profoundly regret that these have not the same conscious belief in Christianity as Christians have; that they are "natural Christians," as Tertullian characterizes them, and not altogether Christians.

Friends, we do well to remember that for none of us here is the question one between the Christian and some other. For us the paganism of the Greeks and Romans is nothing; for us Confucianism is nothing; for us Brahminism is nothing; for us Buddhism is nothing; and every other cult is nothing. If Christianity is a delusion, all the world is, and has always been, without a true religion; men know nothing of the relations between God and man; the protection which religion has heretofore afforded to morality and order is at an end, and the whole subject of a future life is in thick darkness.

Even from the standpoint of earth and time, a belief in Christianity is not to be hastily rejected, for such a belief is in the interest of the human race for this world. Such a belief is in the interest of honesty, truthfulness, purity and benevolence; in the interest of all the virtues which bring happiness to human life. For Christianity adds to all other considerations for leading a good life incentives of its own, and these are the most powerful influences known to man. What are some of these influences? I ask you to consider in this view some of the principal doctrines of Christianity. An All-seeing and All-observing God; a God of infinite love; an infinite and loving Savior; immortality. A heaven and a hell. Heaven, with blessings so great for those who love God that we are told: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath

prepared for them that love Him." Hell, a place of fire, of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Independently of religious motives, it may be said that "honesty is the best policy;" that truthfulness and kindness and benevolence on our part tend to develop these qualities on the part of others towards us; that a virtuous life is happier than a life that is not virtuous; that morality is beautiful; that self-sacrifice is noble. But all experience shows that without the sanction of religion these statements have practical weight with few. Whatever value they possess is not excluded by Christianity, but Christianity adds to these worldly considerations others infinitely more powerful. Of these one peculiar to Christianity is its Founder, Jesus Christ, who is its great, central truth. To love Christ is to love God the Father, and also to love our fellowmen. The religion of Christ is adapted to every race, civilized and uncivilized, and to every class and condition of men. Jesus has had, and still has, those who love and obey him among men in every stage of civilization and in every part of the known world; among men of the mightiest intellect and of the lowest; among men of the highest and lowest culture; among those who had previously been flagrant sinners, as well as among those who had always lived decent lives. Skeptics may deny His supernatural personality, but with one accord do they acknowledge His surpassing spiritual and moral excellences, and His surpassing genius. Whatever they may say against our faith, most of them have nothing to say against the great Founder of Christianity, but are constrained to say, with Pilate: "I find no fault in this man." Christ was the one perfect man of the human race. As Christians we affirm

that Christ, being so great, and grand, and good, and perfect, was infinitely more than a man. He was the son of God.

Friends, the important question for each of us to solve is: Can this mighty power for good, which has been a vital force in the world for nearly nineteen centuries, rest on mere fable and therefore untrue? Jesus Himself affirmed that He was the Christ, and in a peculiar and special sense the son of God. According to the gospels, He claimed more. He claimed to be greater than Solomon, the wise and great king of Israel; greater than the temple which was the sacred object of His nation's affection, reverence and pride. He claimed to have power to work miracles, to be the Judge of all men at the last day; that He was to come for the purpose in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; that He was the One who should determine the rewards and punishments due to men for their good or evil deeds. These claims of Christ are recorded in the gospels. Now, that Jesus Himself believed all this concerning Himself, I do not see how any intelligent student can justify doubting. His perfect purity, as profoundly felt by all Christians and by so many eminent non-Christians, is the highest possible guarantee of the honesty of His claims. I ask you to consider the surrounding circumstances. His claims were most distasteful to His countrymen, and to the ecclesiastical authorities of the nation; and of all the claims, the claim that He was the son of God was to all orthodox Jews the greatest of His offenses. The chief priests pronounced it blasphemy; and it was for this claim that they unanimously condemned Him to death. Jesus demonstrated His belief in the claims He made,

both by making them and by submitting to a horrible death in confirmation of them. Do we need more evidence than these facts to justify our acceptance of the claims made by this pure and sober-minded Teacher? If we cannot accept the testimony of such a pure, unselfish, and wonderful character, whose or what testimony can we accept?

But, my dear friends, there is much more evidence of His supernatural character and divine mission than His own trustworthy affirmation. Is not His resurrection from the dead a proof of His supernatural character? There are two forms of proof to establish this truth of the resurrection: There is the written record, and there is the record of an institution. The written record is in old books, old monuments, ancient tombs and coins; the other witness is in an institution that thousands of people organized. Here is the civil war. A score of historians have given us the written record through volumes in the library. Here is the record of Decoration Day, with the flowers on a million graves, and that witness is worth a thousand times more than the histories of scholars. Here is the event named the Declaration of Independence. The written record is in the papers and books and histories of Philadelphia, in 1776, but the real record is in the institution called the Fourth of July. Here is Christ's victory over death. The written record is in the memorabilia of Jesus, and the early te deums, the old chorals, the solemn prayers, the ruins of the little churches of the first century; but the real witness is in the Dies Gaudii, the joyful day—Easter—in which the five hundred disciples who walked and talked with Jesus for forty days burst into living speech. On the day of the crucifixion

the disciples were cowards. Forty days of companionship with Jesus ended, and all were moral heroes. In a few brief years these disciples changed the face of the world and accomplished a political and spiritual revolution. They transformed Egypt, emptied the temples of Athens, and put out the altar fires for Diana of Ephesus; they conquered the iron arm of Rome. Friends, what was their story? It was the story of Christ who was victor over death. They had one theme—the risen Christ. When the broken-hearted people looked down into the grave, they heard the echo of a voice exclaiming: "He is not there; He is risen." The conquest of the Grecian cities was accomplished within forty years after the resurrection of Christ. But during all this time, most of the five hundred witnesses who had been with Jesus were still living on the earth, just as the old soldiers of the civil war are now, after forty years, still living ready to deny or affirm any statement made by the historians about the death of Abraham Lincoln. Do you tell me that those five hundred witnesses who were with Jesus forty days after the resurrection, agreed to keep still and united upon a lie? Start out to accomplish some reform in this city based on a lie and you will very soon learn the feebleness of that kind of an argument. The historical fact of Christ's resurrection is the best established fact in history. If then Christ actually rose from the dead, nothing more is needed to demand the acceptance of what he taught. And the only remaining question for us all is: "What did He teach?"

I admit that there have been many and great men in the past—glorious heroes, patriots, philanthropists; men and women to whom the world bows and bows justly. It

is around such transcendent characters as these, towering like mountains above the common plains of humanity, that the reverence of the ages loves to wrap the robe of a spotless purity, even as the virgin snow enwraps the Rocky ranges. But be it remembered that there is some spot on every shaft of marble, some flaw in every pearl and diamond, some disproportion even in the noblest characters. Once only in the world's history was born an ideal personality; once in the roll of ages, out of the innumerable failures in human nature, a bud developed into a faultless flower. One perfect character has God exhibited on earth. Other men—the greatest, the noblest, the best—have in them a little fragment of a complete life; but in Christ was the perfect humanity, as if the life-blood of every nation were in his veins. That which is noblest and best in every man, and that which is purest and tenderest in every woman, were in His character. Down through the centuries He has come more than a conqueror. In Him we see manhood in perfection; in Him we see patriotism that is pure; in Him we see philanthropy that is disinterested; in Him we see heroism at its highest; in Him we see piety that is sublime. May each of us be wise master-builders after the manner of this Ideal Man, who is not only the world's great teacher, ethical reformer and leader, but the Saviour of the World, the Son of God.

THE PROBLEM OF CHILD LABOR

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FOR years we have known the evils of child labor. Writers have pictured the pale cheeks and despairing faces of the children who toil. Speakers have told of their withered forms and their blighted lives. At times we have felt a passing sympathy, but that compassion has soon relapsed into indifference. We have pitied, but our pity has never moved us to action. And so child labor continues, because public opinion is asleep.

Since child labor is found mostly in the east and in the south, we, in the central states, do not fully appreciate its enormity. We do not see how it especially concerns us. But if in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, or South Carolina, child labor is creating weak-minded and degenerate citizens, it is a menace to the nation; it vitally affects the welfare of every state and every citizen.

During the last twenty years the number of our child-laborers has nearly doubled. The figures are appalling. The latest federal census shows that today, in our glass works, are 8,000 boys under thirteen years of age—8,000 human bodies, eager to grow, and belonging in school, but forced in showers of flying crystals to run all day back and forth past the heat of fiery furnaces, like parts of an automatic mechanism. Today in our tobacco factories are 12,000 child-laborers—12,000 growing children, needing pure and varied exercise, but breathing the tobacco-laden air of the factory; bending over their 12,000 little

benches, their nervous hands working like so many tiny tentacles of a monotonous machine. Today in the coal breakers are 12,000 boys under fourteen years of age—12,000 little backs, born to mature and bear the burdens of future years, but cramped for hours each day over streams of rushing coal in the darkness of dense coal dust. Today in the textile mills are 80,000 child-laborers —80,000 plastic minds, created for active and vigorous growth, but each restrained and centered upon one revolving spindle. This morning, while you and I were sleeping, 2,000,000 children under fourteen years of age were trudging through the mists of dawn toward the mine and factory. Tonight 2,000,000 children, tired and worn, are tossing on restless beds—2,000,000 children. They could people a Chicago.

Certain of our manufacturers insist that child labor is necessary for the economic development of the country. Even if this were true, could we afford such a sacrifice of human life? But it is not true. Economists are agreed that child labor is an economic waste. We cannot change nature's law. When we take children from the playground, the home and the school, and place them for hours at uninteresting machines, their rambling minds are easily distracted. They become inattentive and careless. Their childish and immature intellects cannot understand the possibilities of the machines they operate; they do not make use of the full latent power of those machines. In almost every case the abolition of child labor has increased production. Higher wages must be paid to adults, but the increased production more than justifies the expenditures. Child labor thus means a waste of the potential energies of our factories. It means

a dissipation of the productive power of our nation, unnecessarily, since thousands of full grown men all over the country are looking for work. We are told that helpless parents are dependent upon their children's wages. This is sometimes true, but the number is remarkably small. In most cases the parents feed as parasites on the energy of their children, and we cannot afford to sustain these degenerate and burdensome adults by throwing upon future society more wrecks of their own kind.

We are not only wasting our present ability, but we are robbing the future. These 2,000,000 children who are now being deprived of their energy meant for later years will appear in the nation tomorrow an army of half-made men. We are converting the seeds of our nation's power —possibly the saviors of its future—into feeble and incompetent citizens. England has shown us how child labor degrades the standard of citizenship. Today in London thousands are in misery and poverty because in childhood factory labor exhausted their strength; they have thus developed into a great mass of incapable men and women; they are idle, not from the lack of work, but from lack of ability to do that work. England's late war has shown how her factories are ruining her citizens. Three times she lowered her standard for admission to the army because her men could not stand the test; her government commission found the cause largely in premature labor in factories; her soldiers who died were the victims not so much of Dutch bullets as of African disease; her factories killed more men in that war than did all the Boer guns. Think of the thousands of children whom we are unfitting for the work of tomorrow's shops and tomorrow's machines! We are devitalizing the

builders of our cities and the makers of our homes. Tomorrow must see the arm at the anvil less vigorous, the eye at the wheel less keen, the hand at the throttle less steady. Think of the nameless Edisons, the unknown Morses, whose genius we are stifling in the depressing gloom of the factory and the black dust clouds of the breaker. Think of the Websters, the Garfields, the Lincolns, whose latent power we are crushing. These men came from humble stock; they were born poor; yet such men have made our nation's history; they will mold the future of our republic, but their power must be nurtured by the pure air of the green fields. If they were given only a chance, what might these child-laborers not become! What wonders might they not achieve to enlighten civilization! What benefits might they not confer upon humanity!

But what is it to us that thousands of children are robbed of their strength and turned helpless into the world? Our loved ones are not in that class; they are at play and at school. What is it to us that thousands are pleading for a chance to develop their bodies and minds? We sleep as well; we still enjoy the comforts of home; we have no time to think of the burdens of little children. Were some unforeseen catastrophe suddenly to disable and ruin 2,000,000 of our citizens and leave them helpless, dependent upon the state, we should be appalled and horrified. Were 2,000,000 soldiers, with beat of drum and blare of trumpet, inspired by martial music, marching to the fields of danger, our blood would tingle with patriotic emotion. But there is nothing startling or dramatic in the gradual ruin of 2,000,000 children—slowly sapped of their strength. The press does not publish the news;

politicians do not espouse their cause. These children have neither votes nor wealth; they are so small and unimportant. Unnoticed, forgotten, they quietly grind away their lives. This is their privilege of living in free America.

And so year after year child labor is wasting away our youth, and it will continue to do so as long as the public conscience remains indifferent. Public opinion is an irresistible force. When it cried out against poison in our food, congress was compelled to answer with a pure food law. When public opinion protested against foreign rate discriminations, congress was forced to pass a railroad rate law. When public opinion shall raise its voice against the enslavement of American children, then, and only then, will the children be free. In our hands, then—in the hands of the people—lies the future of these child-laborers. Unto us are the cramped, little arms raised in humble appeal. When we saw Cuba crushed we could not remain inactive; we even waged war to relieve our alien neighbors. But when we see the children of our own country, the hope of our nation's future, robbed of their birthright of opportunity, we view their fate with unconcern and calmly submit to their destruction.

We did not thus treat the negro—he worked in the open fields, his life brightened by music, poetry and pleasure. But we keep the child-laborers in black clouds of coal dust and within the dreary walls of the factory. The savage of the forest teaches and trains his youth; even the birds and the beasts protect their young; but the United States of America, the nation that has shed so much blood and sacrificed so much wealth to give freedom of development to every human being, coins the blood

of its children into gold and turns them out as worthless dross to dilute the strength of the nation.

Patriots and heroes of '65, history tells how you gave your lives and your treasure to have our nation unspotted, pure and free; how you stained with your blood the fields of battle; how you stormed the mountain heights and rushed to the embrace of death; how you languished in camp and prison, victims of anguish and disease, to bring freedom to the oppressed and leave opportunity as the birthright of all your countrymen. Shall history say of us that we selfishly consumed the fruit of your victory; that the blessings we received at your hands we withheld from the next generation; that, unabashed and unshamed, we plundered and robbed them of their future; that at the moment when their hopes should be brightest and their ambitions unbounded, when their plastic minds should be reaching for greater knowledge and greater power, when they should be climbing hills, swimming rivers, or playing in the open air, we crushed their rising hopes, stifled their ambitions and their dreams, and condemned them to unending toil?

Never before has the public conscience been so sensitive to national wrongs. A zeal for justice has been enkindled in the hearts of the people. Justice is a craving of man's nature. It is a law of God, founded upon nothing less than His eternal wisdom. It has dethroned kings and emperors, abolished slavery, and changed the map of the world.

When justice sees the little backs bent in dense clouds of coal dust that make perpetual night, that clog every cell and tissue, that line and smother the lungs; little hands and feet, cut and bruised by rushing coal; tender

lungs breathing the hot and impure air of the cotton mill, white with its foul and sickening odors; when it sees the army of boys who are daily wilting under the terrible heat of the glass furnaces, whose exposed bodies are cut by millions of flying crystals, burned and scarred by melting glass; when it sees them tired and worn at night, finding no charm in the place called home and gathering around the warm stove of a bright saloon, where, with morals destroyed and hopes crushed, they degenerate into drunkenness and crime; when it sees the restraint of the children's close confinement; when no active exercise invigorates their systems, their minds centered upon one thing, their eyes strained to catch every turn of swiftly revolving wheels, their ears ever ringing with the whizz and whir of buzzing machines, disciplined into ever ringing parts of a dull, monotonous system; when it sees how innocence is being crushed and youthful purity is being spoiled, it will call for an awakened public opinion—persistent, compelling, irresistible—which shall move legislators and executives to action and forever blot child labor from our land.

Then from mine and factory shall we hear the echo of a voice, divinely sweet: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me."

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